





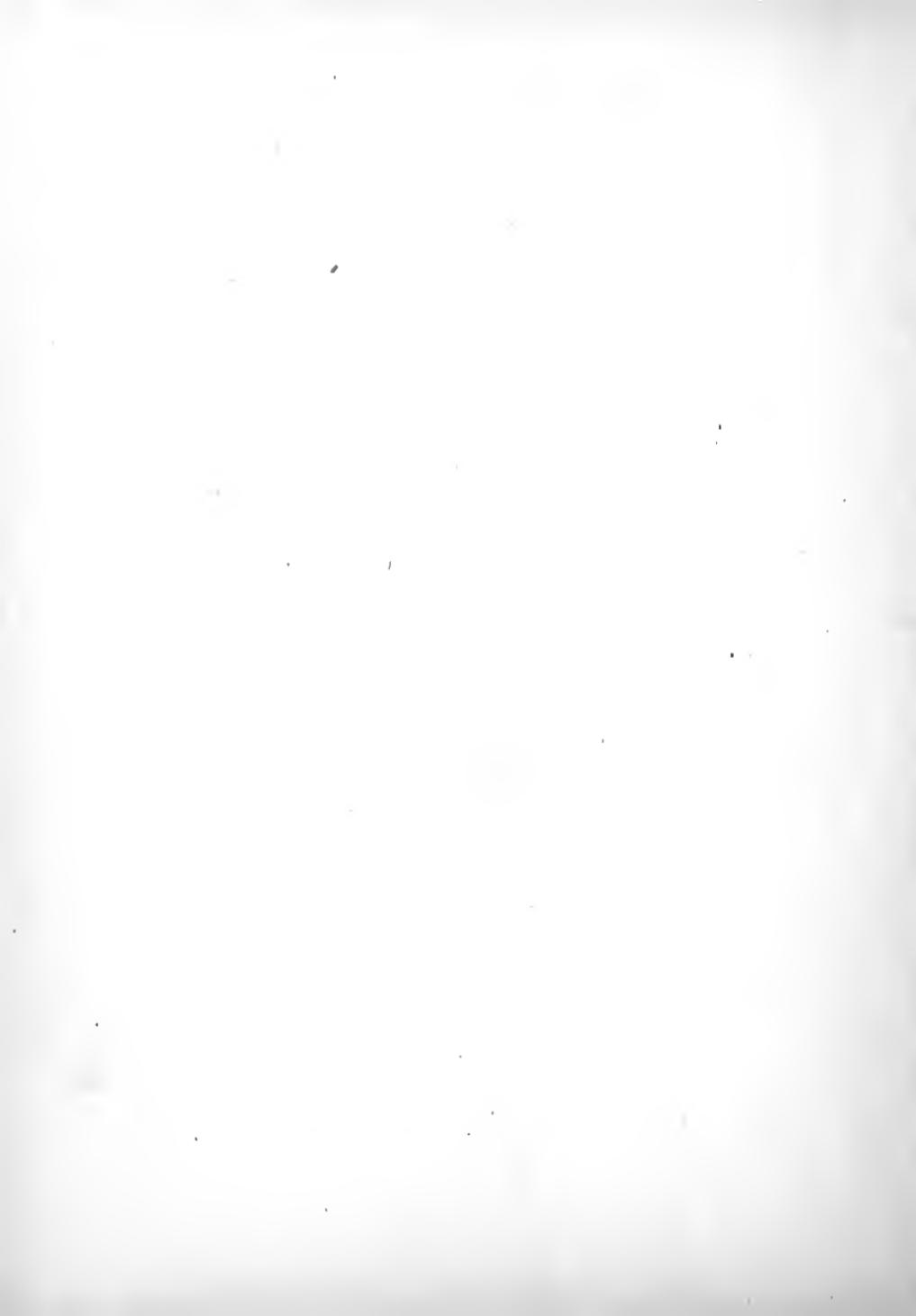
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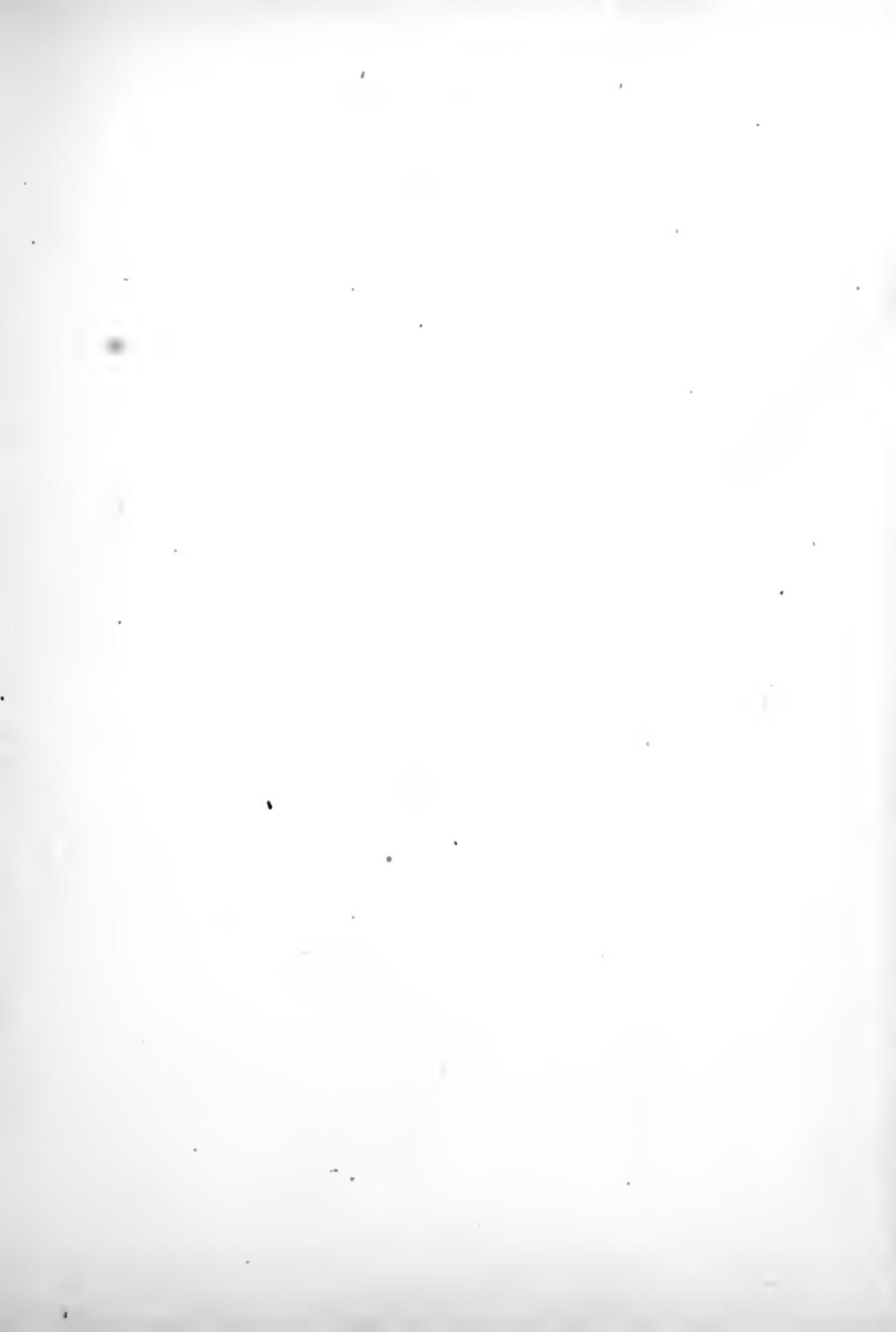
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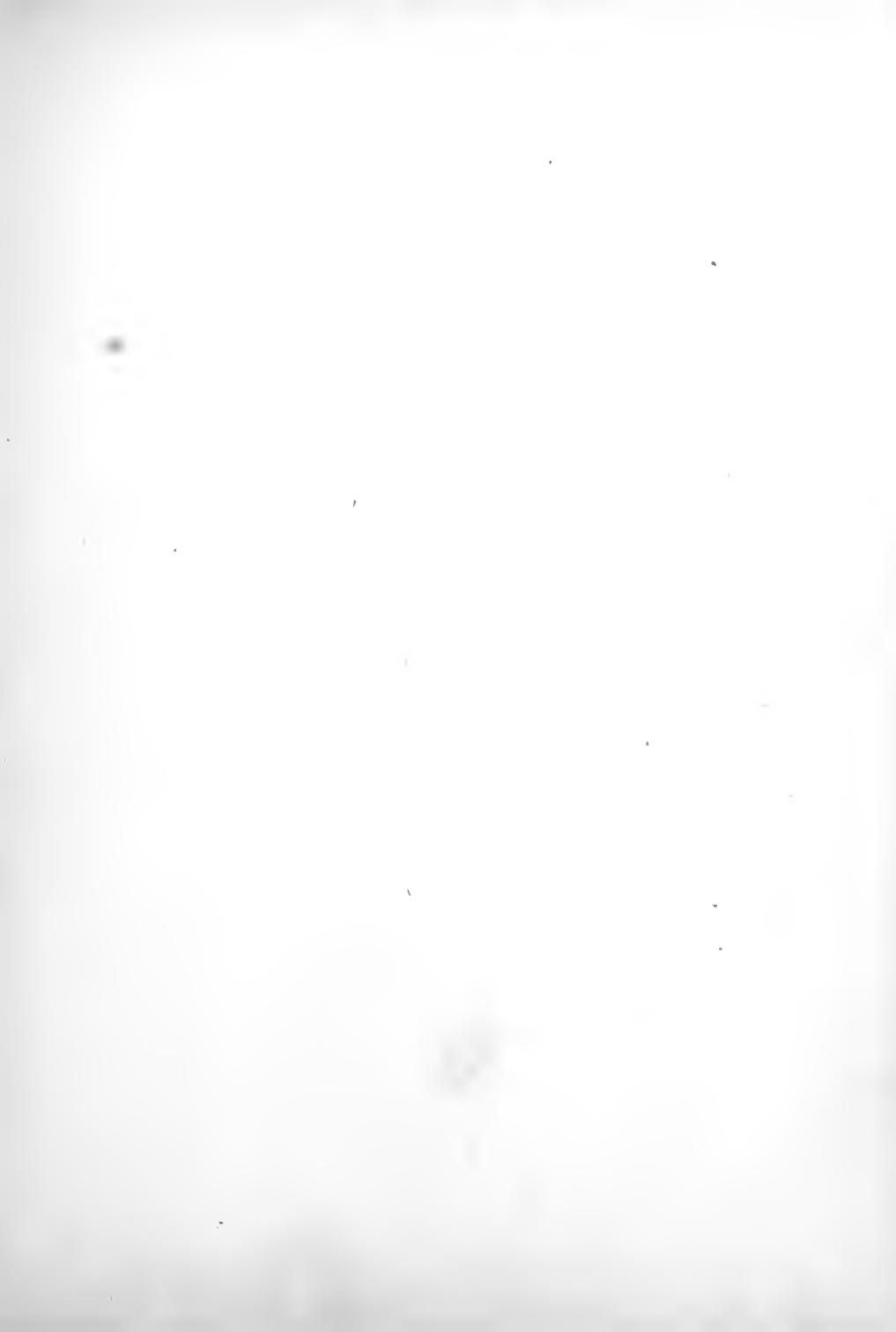
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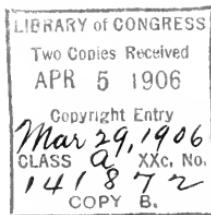
INTO THE LIGHT AND OTHER VERSE



INTO THE LIGHT AND OTHER VERSE

BY EDWARD ROBESON TAYLOR

SAN FRANCISCO
The Stanley-Taylor Company
M C M V I



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by EDWARD ROBESON TAYLOR

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TO THE MUSE

MY LONG-LOVED MUSE, DO THOU
ATTEND ME KINDLY NOW:
LEAD ME ALONG THE DEVIOUS PATHS OF RHYME
TO HELICON'S UNFAILING SPRINGS,
WHERE POESY WITH SPLENDENT WINGS,
AND DOWERED TO SOAR BEYOND THE REACH OF TIME,
HER BANNERED GLORY FLINGS
ABOVE ALL COMMON THINGS,
AND WHERE THROUGHOUT HER SACRED GROVE
MY FANCY'S TROOP IS FREE TO ROVE.
OH, CHIDE ME NOT THAT I SHOULD DARE
TO BUILD SUCH CASTLE IN THE AIR,
WHEREFROM MY DREAMS WERE WONT TO PEER
ON LIFE'S VAST MAZE THIS MANY A YEAR,
IN HOPE THAT THEY IN SOME EMBODIED STRAIN
MIGHT ASK THY GREAT APPROVAL NOT IN VAIN;
FOR SHOULD NO THOUGHT OF ME OR MINE
THY UNRELENTING BOSOM STIR,
THOU STILL WOULDST BE TO ME DIVINE,
I STILL WOULD BE THY WORSHIPPER.

THE POET TO HIMSELF

O FOOLISH ONE, WHY CRAVE THE ORPHEAN LYRE?
CANST THOU AWAKE ITS HEART-DELIGHTING STRAINS,
OR HOPE, WITH ALL THE CUNNING OF THY PAINS,
TO SHAKE THE SOUL WITH THUNDERS OF THINE IRE?
AND SHOULDST THOU STRIKE THE CHORDS OF ALL DESIRE,
AH, WHO WOULD PAUSE TO LISTEN?—GREEDS, AND GAINS,
AND OSTENTATION'S PRIDE, CHOKE VIRTUE'S VEINS,
WHILE SPIRITUAL THINGS UNWEPT EXPIRE. . . .

SUCH WORDS LACK SPICE OF WISDOM: WOULDST THOU DARE
TO GIVE LIFE'S ROSE IN KEEPING OF DESPAIR,
OR FEAR THE MUSE HER MEMORIED HAUNTS MAY FLY?
THE WORLD IS ALWAY BETTER THAN IT SEEMS,
AND IF, INDEED, A MESSAGE IN THEE LIE,
SOME ONE IS HOPING FOR IT IN HIS DREAMS.



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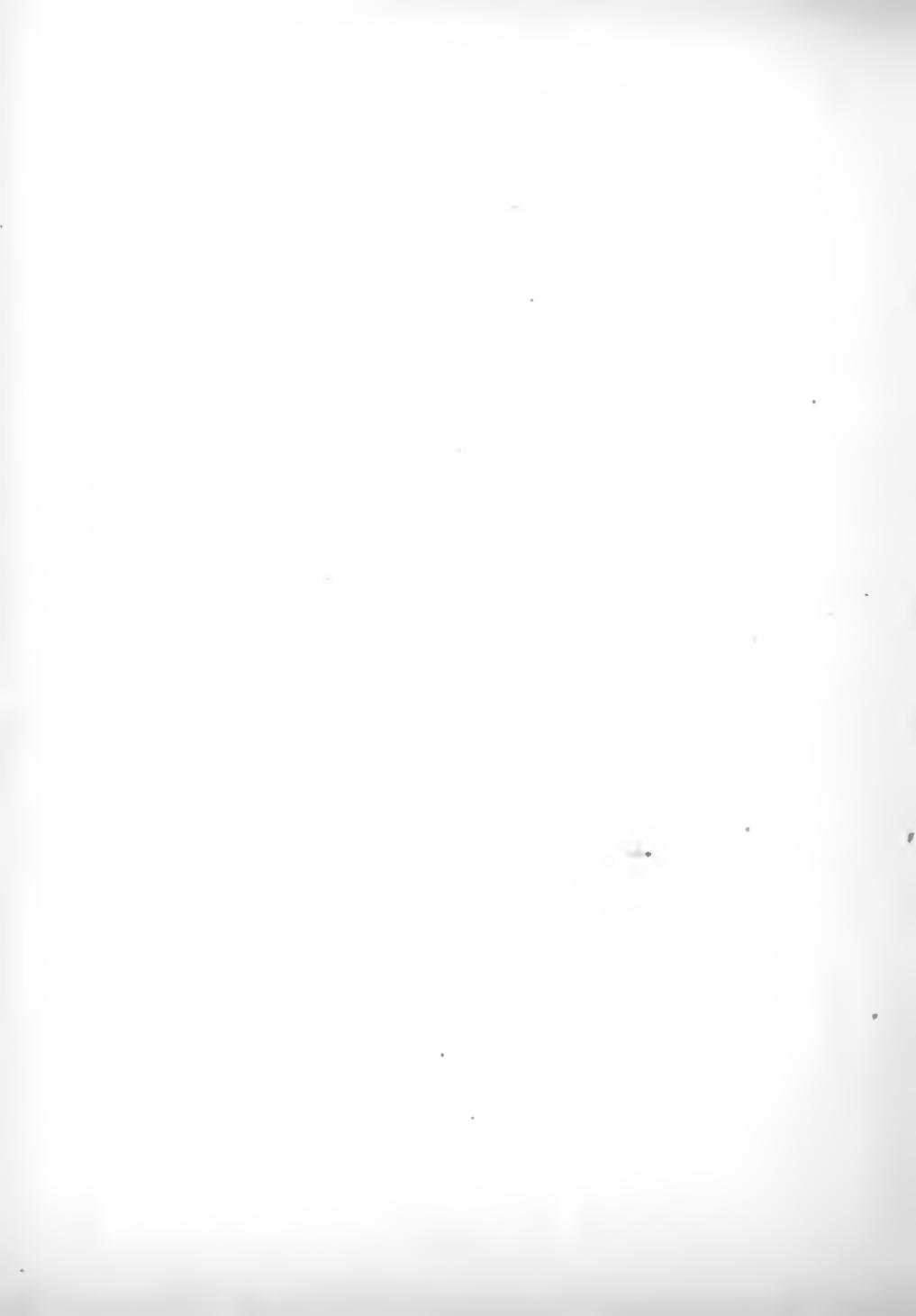
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PREFATORY NOTE.—Of the pieces in this volume “Into the Light” was published in its first edition of 1,500 copies in the latter part of 1901, the copies of that edition being now about exhausted. Since its publication it has been revised in places and nine stanzas have been added to it. “A Cactus,” “Under a Pine at the Grand Canyon,” “To the Grand Canyon,” “In the Petrified Forest,” and “A Lizard of the Petrified Forest,” were published in *Out West*; “To the Owl that alighted above the Picture of Athens,” in *The Independent* (N. Y.); “Sound and Color” and “Man and Tree,” in the *San Francisco Examiner*, and “The Orchard,” in the *San Francisco Chronicle*. A few of the pieces have been taken from “Moods and Other Verse,” now out of print. All the remaining pieces are here published for the first time.



UNDER THE PINE



INTO THE LIGHT

Let us choose to us judgment; let us know among ourselves what is good.—Job xxxiv-4.

Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.—Psalms xix-2.

What dost thou see when without thee thou lookest, O all-searching Man?

Life, ever life, amid changes by multiplex rhythms controlled—
Rhythms that throb without end in immensity's vastness of space,
Mingling and blending in chorus which sings of the Order Divine.

What dost thou see when within thee thou lookest, O all-searching Man?

Thee as a spirit and atom of all the mysterious whole;
Giving as well as receiving, bound to the infinite past,
Made by and making thy future that stretches eternally on.



I

And now, dear friend, weary and sick at heart
With what thou hast been and with what thou art,
Come, let us sit beneath this centuried pine,
Where Nature's self may heal thee of thy smart.

II

For here there broods such feeling of repose,
Such soothing quiet all around us flows,
That for the blessed time life seems to hush
Its doubtful triumphs and its certain woes.

III

Ah, well-a-day, what heart has not its pains,
Its grievous losses, incommensurate gains,
And as result of all the strenuous strife,
What little profit at the last remains!

IV

By thoughts like these we are at times oppressed;
But who the loss or profit can attest?
Our glass we see through darkly, and full oft
What seemed the worst was in the end the best.

V

In these unclouded heavens no stars we see,
Yet all roll there in ^{sovran} majesty;
So, when thy sky seems reft of every star,
In quenchless light they still may live for thee. . . .

VI

The bubbles dancing on convivial wine,
The restful dewdrops on the procreant vine,
But symbolize each being life has known:
All vanish at a breath and leave no sign.

VII

We meet insatiate death at every turn;
Life's brightest candles flicker as they burn;
While lone oblivion pours forevermore
Her flood lethean from exhaustless urn. . . .

VIII

Thus sayest thou, as has been said before
In various iteration o'er and o'er;
But canst thou mete or weigh the least of lives?
And if earth's work be done, why askest more?

IX

Lament not o'er the failures of the Past,
Nor fondly hope thy Future may be cast
Where victory waits thee with unfading bay;—
The Present only is thy first and last.

X

Nor seek to blot the record of thy years
With self-condemning, uneffectual tears;
But let thy page be such that day by day
Still less and less the evil there appears.

XI

Beat all thy moments into links of gold,
Whose uncorroding chain may serve to hold
Thy anxious spirit fast to Faith's firm rock,
As Doubt's engulfing waves are round thee rolled.

XII

It cannot matter, for we are so small
A part of the immeasurable All,
Thy evil demon whispers in thine ear
When pleasures lure thee as when shadows fall.

XIII

But know that every eon which has gone
Before thee since life's earliest breath was drawn
Has helped compound thee into what thou art—
A deathless spirit moving on and on;

XIV

And that the tiniest creature's slenderest strain
In loneliest wilderness is not in vain,
But makes inseparable part of all
That fills Divinity's unending reign.

XV

All things and elements are kin to thee,
As are the cones of this imperial tree
To every member of the host of stars—
Ay, even to those no telescope may see.

XVI

Couldst thou but only feel, without surcease,
Though woes and dangers round thee still increase,
Thyself as part of the eternal scheme,
Thy soul might anchor in the port of Peace—

XVII

The eternal scheme whose order as divine
Thou mayst not question, with its blazing sign
 Above and round thee, and its rhythmic note
Forever ringing in that heart of thine.

XVIII

How full, how rich is life! Dear God, did we
But ope our eyes and dare with faith to see
 Thy splendors hearted with untainted joys,
Each pulse would thrill with sudden ecstasy.

XIX

O garniture of glory round us spread,
By Beauty's crystal streams forever fed,
 Divine expression of the mind divine,
Unchanging, changing, fleeing yet not fled!

XX

O Music, throned within the heart of things,
What tribute to thee every being brings!
 What waves of thine through space's vastness roll!
What notes of thine great Nature ever sings!

XXI

Mysterious all; yet that proud sun which prints
Upon yon mountain-peak such splendrous tints,
Holds not one secret greater than the grass
Which at our feet its wonders humbly hints.

XXII

The Sphinx outlives the myriad ones who ask
The cause and reason of their burdening task,
And with her silent lip and stony gaze
Still ever wears impenetrable mask.

XXIII

And though the crown of life sat on her brow,
While hottest blood her bosom did avow,
With her great head encasing brain as great,
She would be answerless e'en then as now. . . .

XXIV

How very little is the most that's known;
By what sore travail man has slowly grown;
What luring heavens have led him to despair;
What dreadful hells have made his soul their own!

XXV

What is he more than atomy that wings
Its predetermined flight mid other things
That breathe a moment, then unheeded pass
To where no note of being ever sings? . . .

XXVI

Wail as thou wilt, but can thy loudest cry
Be more than vain, inconsequential sigh?
And art thou blinded so by Evil's bane
As not to see the Good which blazes nigh?

XXVII

Restore thy vision, and as now the prayer
Of parting day stirs all the silent air,
With thine own soul the covenant renew,
Thy cross through Duty's thorniest to bear.

XXVIII

For 'tis no mystery that some task is thine,
For thee to make it, if thou wilt, divine,
And that while work remains for thee to do,
Do it thou must, nor weaken nor repine.

XXIX

Whether it be what men deem high or low
'Tis not for thee to question or to know,
 But that thou knead thy heart's best blood in it
Is thy concern, nor cease to make it so;

XXX

For shouldst thou slight it in the least, or pause
To quaff the nectar of the world's applause,
 Or nurse, self-satisfied, a base content,
Thou art a traitor to thy dearest cause.

XXXI

And dost thou dream of an immortal life
Where work is not and happiness is rife;
 Where Passion dies upon the bed of ease,
And Pain wields nevermore its dreadful knife?

XXXII

'Tis thus to deem the structure of thy soul
Can be completed as around it roll
 This life's few, fleeting years; 'tis thus to make
A senseless, fairy bliss thy farthest goal.

XXXIII

If endless life be thine how canst thou be,
When disembodied from thy flesh, set free
From all thy past — thy spirit newly made?
Death cannot work such miracle in thee.

XXXIV

What age on age, what power on power,
Conspired ere this wee, unpretending flower
Could hold its sweet communion with us here,
To heap the measure of this golden hour!

XXXV

No single stroke can alter or create:
Continuous flows the river of thy fate,
As it will flow with all its good and ill
Through Death's dark-mantled, unimpeded gate.

XXXVI

Thou art a spirit now no less than when
Thy form has vanished from the sight of men;
Thy home the Universe, where none may dare
To bound the farthest limits of thy ken.

XXXVII

But if by wasting of thy natural might
Thy soul has added nothing to its height,
How durst thou hope for perfectness or ease,
Or with celestial raiment to be dight?

XXXVIII

And didst thou know none other life could be
Than this which holds such treasured wealth for thee,
Thy Duty's star would burn as bright as though
It lit thy path to immortality.

XXXIX

Words cannot save thee though they be of gold
Beyond all value earth has ever told,
And though with collocation's art they seem
From out divinest sources to have rolled.

XL

The generations ever come and go
On vasty seas of blended joy and woe,
But what the deep-hid meaning of it all
It matters not for curious thee to know.

XLI

It only matters if thy conscience sleep,
Or thou the golden hours in bondage keep,
Or if some deed, or word, or look of thine,
Should cause the angels of the soul to weep.

XLII

Enjoy the day, as Horace says, is well;
To lounge and drink with Omar, as we tell
Our loves to every moment of the day,
Is with enchantment for the time to dwell;

XLIII

But these are condiments and not the bread
Wherewith life's feast is nourishingly spread,
And deem thou not with diet such as theirs
A starving soul in bounty can be fed.

XLIV

Know thou the Gods are good to him who bears
Unvanquished stoutly on; who in despair's
Entangling web weaves many a thread of hope;
While all the stars light him that boldly dares.

XLV

What matters if the temple's ruin lies
With none for mourner save the grass which sighs
 Where once the goddess undisputed reigned
Amid the joyance of her people's cries?

XLVI

Why shouldst thou waste unnecessary tears
Because along the roadside of the years
 Are strewn the wrecks of many a star-crowned fame
That once enravished unremembered ears?

XLVII

And e'en the Parthenon — that matchless thing
Which still in beauty's sky on broken wing
 Soars as the chosen one death would not slay —
Why should the thought of her our bosom sting?

XLVIII

It is enough to feel that thou and I
Are on this earth, to work, and serve, and die,
 As have the millions who have gone before,
And as will other millions by and by.

XLIX

And when thy voice is mute, thy strivings o'er,
By no deft magic can report add more;
Nor can subtraction be should Fame refuse
To jewel thee with baubles from her store.

L

Fame's nought, while every deed that man has done
Vibrating from its source has onward run,
To mingle with its kind and ever beat
For good or ill beneath the quickening sun.

LI

And as for thee in time long past was stored
The force which in thy grate full oft has roared,
So for thy soul has grown from age to age
The spirit's energy in heaping hoard.

LII

Things, forces, change and change, but never die;
Infinitude is writ on earth and sky;
And if it be no atom lives in vain,
How can thy spirit ever clod-like lie?

LIII

This lily-bloom, we would not wish to stir
From where it gazes on the towering fir,
Is rooted in the mountain's mighty past,
And churches are because the temples were.

LIV

Let not Necessity's most cunning wit
Lead thee into Materialism's pit;
No wind-blown waif art thou, and in thy soul
Conscience and all her court unsleeping sit.

LV

And shouldst thou Right's most petty creature slay,
Not all the worlds nor powers could put away
The sure, commensurate penalty from thee;
It may be soon or late, but thou must pay.

LVI

Thou art thine own redeemer, thou alone;
Not even the greatest can for thee atone;
Nor can one bloom unfold within thy soul
Except from seed thy careful hand has sown.

LVII

Wert thou not forced to pay thy sin's full cost,
On Chaos' waves the universe were tossed,
The Good and Evil be no more opposed,
And black oblivion settle o'er the lost.

LVIII

Man is not nourished on ambrosial food;
'Tis his to work, and serve, and not to brood;
And if the knife of suffering cut his heart,
The wound, it must be, carries with it good.

LIX

Though all the blossoms of thy heart be gone,
Though from thy bosom's bitter wells be drawn
But tears that hold thy consecrated dead,
With freshened courage thou must still go on.

LX

The Evil rages and we know not why;
But overhead we may behold a sky
'Neath which the hosts of an eternal Good,
With pinions dropping balm, forever fly.

LXI

And shouldst thou falter not thy keel may sweep
Serenity's unbounded, stormless deep,
Where mid its myriad Islands of the Blest
Thou mayst communion with the noblest keep.

LXII

Duty will seem no ruthless tyrant there,
With Faith and Love, triumphant o'er despair,
To guide all heartening breezes to thy sail,
As Hope's entralling music fills the air. . . .

LXIII

But lo! the day is done; entrancing night
With tremulous hush begins her noiseless flight,
While we in wonderment still ever new
Seem dowered afresh by her transfiguring light.

LXIV

And as we silent down the mountain go,
What spirit-streams around our footsteps flow!
What soothing ecstasies of peace proclaim
That God is with us 'tis enough to know!

NOT DEAD

The poets all are dead, the critic cries,
Save those that do but feed upon the great,
Who through the years have kept empurpled state
Beneath the radiance of adoring eyes;
That now the Muse her benison denies;
That thought no more with wingèd word can mate,
And breathing music's deep delight create
The songs that Art eternally will prize.
Not so: the poet now, as ever, sings,
And still shall sing, for all who care to hear,
Ecstatic strains his very blood has wrought.
Each Present hath its jewel-hearted things
Whereby it lives; but oft the Gods are near,
When our beclouded sight beholds them not.

IMPROPTU
IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION:
WHAT IS POETRY?
(AFTER ALFRED DE MUSSET)

To drive the chase in every hallowed spot
By Memory haunted, and the captured thought,
All tremulous, uncertain, firm to hold
Balanced on axis glorious of gold;
To stamp eternity upon the dream
Which but an instant lights him with its gleam;
Deeply to love the beautiful and true,
And their harmonious virtues to pursue;
In his own heart to look and list unto
The echo of his genius; all alone
To sing, to laugh, and make his tearful moan,
Thereto unprompted by design or guile;
Out of a sigh, a word, a look, and even a smile,
A work of art consummately to rear
Full of sweet charmingness and moving fear;
A radiant pearl to fashion from a tear:
Such is the passion of the poet's strife,
His boon, his great ambition, and his life.

MEDITATION

Be up and doing! — In this time of steam
Let not one moment pass unlaboring by;
On these electric, wide-spread pinions fly
To where alone the stars of action beam.

Dear poet, leave thy phantom land of dream,
Where lazy clouds all idly pace the sky,*
While Fancy's fairies in the coverts lie,
To watch with thee some naiad-haunted stream. . . .

Thou many-tongued, immittigable Voice,
With mine own soul I would in quiet be,
Till Silence medicine my wounded ear;
Then with the heart of things shall I rejoice,
The true realities divinely see,
And deathless harmonies enraptured hear.

* "When he bestrides the lazy-pacing clouds,
And sails upon the bosom of the air."
Romeo and Juliet, Act II, Scene II.

THE GENERATIONS

Deep-hearted Ocean, thou dost mock the years
As one that glories in immortal youth,
Untorn by time's inexorable tooth,
Unmoved by war's or ruin's blood and tears.

The snow-clad peaks, the towering domes man rears,
Feel at their core decay's relentless ruth,
While thou,—great symbol of faith-crowned truth,—
Securely bidest, free of doubts and fears.

And so, the Sea of Life rolls endless on,
From out the fecund womb of eldest yore,
Sparkling with joys, or gloomed with pains and woes.
The generations one by one have gone,
While still that Sea, which all their bubbles bore,
Unhasting, yet unpausing, ebbs and flows.

GHOSTS

The ghosts that come from out the years,
Dream-winged and purged of passion's fears,
Troop round me now as oft before,
To fondly lead my footsteps o'er
The paths my heart of heart endears.

What hope-wreathed joy on joy appears,
What bloomy cheeks no anguish sears,
What vasty skies wherein to soar,
 O time of old!

Their voices die upon mine ears,
I cry to them, but no one hears,
While other ghosts around me pour—
The ghosts of Now that madly roar,
And mock my unrelieving tears,
 O time of old!

NIGHT AND DAY

The waves of Night dashed over me
With such tempestuous roar and roll,
It dazed all sense that such a sea
Could threat to whelm the struggling soul.

But when the Day, led in by dawn,
With hope and promise radiant shone,
I found the murderous billows gone,
And all the air with rainbows sown.

HOPE

You tantalizing demon, Fear,
Back to your native night,
Nor bar sweet Hope that hovers near
On wide-spread wings of light.

THE SOUL

Who is it dares disturb my rest
In this luxuriant poppy field,
Where languorous airs within my breast
All rare delights of music yield?

I am thy Soul!— Up from thy bed,
And sweep the film from out thine eye,
So that by consecration led,
I may be saved that's like to die.

FOUR IN ONE

Science, and Art, and Ethics—these great three
Support the mystic structure of the soul,
While sweet Religion everlastingly,
Deep as creation, underlies the whole.

DEATH

The chattering guests, in sumptuous, proud array,
Filled to the throat the heavy, glittering rooms;
Ennui once more hard labored to be gay,
While flowers hid deep all soul-tormenting glooms.

But when stern midnight tolled, and every air
Reeked like some noisome, pestilential breath,
They sudden saw, with horror's mad despair,
Gone was their guest, and in his place sat Death.

NOT FOR DEATH

Death, take my body; it has served me well,
And I begrudge thee not thy wished-for dole;
But to thy very face this dare I tell:
Thou shalt not have the treasure of my soul.

VACANCY

Unchanging vacancy now fills alone
This chambered house: no sorrowing voice, or gay,
Nor woman's ministries, make full the day
That love once clasped in her bejewelled zone;
Life, with its myriad miracles, has flown,
While all the garden, where the breeze dared play
With many a sun-kissed rose, lies nude and gray,
Save where with tangled brier overgrown. . . .

O Soul, art thou the house thus emptied quite
Of all the glories which erstwhile did thrill
Each nook and cranny of thy golden rooms?
Is now thy garden fallen into blight,
And do the strenuous winds no longer will
To scatter skyward thy despairing glooms?

QUESTION

I sit and muse in these autumnal days,
Companioned by the wistful, falling leaves,
As now the far-gone year in passing grieves,
And on our hearts his thin hand sadly lays.

But through the sombrous web November weaves
We see the Spring her verdurous banners raise
Mid bursting bloom and songsters' joysome praise,
While every clod with expectation heaves.

The leaves are fluttering from my life's old tree,
Fast withering now, yet once all freshly fair,
And soon dread Winter will have stripped it bare;
And then, without deserving, will it see
Another Spring, and wondering breathe an air
That tells of glories that are yet to be?

O MOMENT STAY!

O moment, stay, so beautiful thou art!
Exclaimed the Faust immortal Goethe drew,
As consummation lit his raptured view,
And peace, long-tossed, slept sweetly in his heart.
Alas! it came but only to depart;
For death seized Faust, the while Mephisto's crew
Sprang at his soul, once false, but now so true,
It warded off hell's most envenomed dart.
The moments stay not, nor have ever stayed:
They pass, and we pass with them, closely bound
By mystery's chain in endless, rhythmic round;
But nought is lost, nor penalty unpaid,
While work and service shall be nobly crowned
Though he that wrought them in the dust be laid.

LIGHT IN DARKNESS

(A REMEMBRANCE)

As slow we strolled along the rocky shore,
The ocean's surges ever restless beat,
And broke in flowers of foam around our feet
Mid wind's and breaker's diapasoned roar.

The hovering fog its misty wings spread o'er
The land and sea, till from its rock-bound seat
The horn's hoarse signal labored to entreat
The venturing ships now anxious to the core. . . .

Then lo! the sun victorious cleaved the dark,
And fell full radiant on the signal tower,
Until it gleamed as with transfiguring glow.

Thou timorous, doubting soul, why shouldst thou mark
With fear the blackest cloud, or dare to cower
Though hard beset by all the hosts of woe.

THE NEW YEAR

1906

Time opens once again his mystic doors,
And we, as ever, at the portal stand,
By every breeze of expectation fanned,
While Hope, lark-like, sings joyous as it soars.

Yet havoc's demon madly ramps and roars,
Mid blood and ruin, through the Russian land,
Till heartened Liberty, for centuries banned,
In every ear her tale of pity pours.

And War seems puddling in his crimson mire,
To find occasion for his base desire,
Where jealous nations may new horrors rear;
But Hope, undaunted, wings still high and higher,
Until beyond the clouds its note rings clear,
With Faith's, above the whine of Doubt and Fear.

MEMORY'S BELLS

The Past's memorial troop insistent ring
 Within my heart their deeply-sounding bells,
 Whose mournful tone in every throbbing tells
 Of joys that evermore have taken wing.
Yet 'tis not sadness which alone they bring;
 For as I list, once more my bosom swells
 With boyhood's bounding sport in woods and dells,
 Where rapture's voices unrestrainèd sing.
Ah, where are they who filled the long-drawn hours
 Of every season's wonderments with me
 As though life had but happiness for sign?
The bells have ceased; the sky of evening lowers;
 The fruitful Summer can no longer be,
 And barren Winter now alone is mine.

DREAM MUSIC

O spirit mine, arouse thee from a sleep
Which only sloth or weakness can prolong,
And on the dazzling mountain-peaks of song
Let Beauty's legions in thy heart's blood leap;
Then list thou to the harmonies that sweep
The infinite paths of infinite life along,
Content to shrine but one of that vast throng
In music all the years will love to keep. . . .
This luring ecstasy, how vain! how vain!
But though my reason's every tongue upbraid,
I yet am bound a prisoner to its will;
For yesternight mine ear caught such a strain,
By dream's own fingers on my spirit played,
That its melodious raptures shake me still.

A DAY WITH MUSIC

The morning wooed us to the ocean-shore,
Where stretched at ease in tranquil joy we lay,
Watching the breakers' near, incessant play,
And stirred by music of their thunderous roar;
Then deep Beethoven's grand, symphonic lore
Enchained the sequent hours of the day,
While evening saw great Verdi's lighter sway
Rule our obedient hearts as ne'er before.
O miracle, in such brief span to be
Far borne on Music's multitudinous waves,
That roll triumphant over death's vast graves!—
Life-breathing waves, illimitably free,
Divine, eternal; while upon their breast
The universe itself is rocked to rest.

THE DIVINE ORDER

Dost thou let vastness overwhelm thy thought
When led along imagination's way,
Nor dare to dream that some propitious day
Will bring thee gems with newer radiance fraught?
Yon star's no farther with its beckoning ray,
Whose distance science never yet has wrought,
Than that alluring rose thy heart besought,
Within thy lady's loving hand to lay.
The faintest music of intoning spheres
May beat harmonious on thy raptured ears,
While glories infinite thine eyes may see.
Soar where thou wilt on world-compelling wings,
Still canst thou list the voice divine of things
Proclaim thou art in them and they in thee.

THE DIVINE HARMONY

A single soul—what microscopic mite
When measured 'gainst the universe of things—
A voice that for a moment sobs and sings,
And then seems lost in silence of the night.
But yet how great the meanest, merest sprite
When measured in the universe of things;
For there 'tis one with earth's supremest kings,
And bathes in unextinguishable light.
It must be that the note of every soul
Is needed in the harmonies that roll
And throb eternally with power divine;
And we have drank, when stars were fair to see,
The summit's deep, revealing ecstasy,
As shone resplendent the assuring sign.

TO A MARBLE STATUETTE OF BEATRICE

When youthful Dante's roving, marvellous eyes
Upon the universe began to ope
As if with presage of their future scope,
They saw thy great original arise;
And then he thrilled as one divinely wise,
For well he knew the star of faith and hope,
That should lead on his travailing soul to cope
With all the hells beneath storm-clouded skies.
And now in marble spotless as her name
Thou dost compel such tribute to her fame
As if her own deep gaze upon us beamed;
For thine the art wherein we newly see
Some hint of that which Dante greatly dreamed
Of woman's loveliness and purity.

BEAUTY

(AFTER FERNAND GREGH)

This eve dream brims my heart, my tears unbidden rise,
Eachwhere I feel another infinite soul to be,
My silence fills the air with tremulous harmony,
And flowers irradiant bloom at will of my closed eyes.

My youth-compelling blood stirs with its ardent cries
The old, far world whose kindred spirit speaks to me,
And in the kindly dark immingling forms I see
In motion's endless play and color's myriad dyes.

O moment thou of Beauty! Could I nothing know
Save this thy swift-winged rapture in my clouded way,
'Twere well to have been born, to death content I'd go.

This eve my pride fed full on what man dreams for
 aye;
And, like a bird one catches at the casement, so
The infinite in my hand all palpitating lay.

LIFE'S BLEND

Fret not, O vainly striving soul,
For that thou mayst not reach thy goal,
Or that the mists of evil bar
From thee the light of many a star;
For as we watch life's myriad streams,
And sound the deepness of our dreams,
This truth of truths we learn to feel,
Beyond all reasoning to conceal,
That the divinely ordering Will
Gives neither Good alone, nor Ill,
The sceptre of unmixed control,
But that in blended wave they roll
Throughout creation's star-set whole.

THE POEM

All Beauty's magic-weaving airs
Blow through the Poet's answering soul,
Till thrilled with ecstasy he dares
The building of some flawless whole.

LIFE'S JEWELS

Seek not life's jewels where the poppies grow,
Nor where Desire, all passion-poisoned, rears
Her luring domes, but in the heart of woe,
With shores far washed by sanctifying tears.

RICHES

All that life's ocean infinitely bears
Of joys beyond all measure may be thine,
For everything is his who nobly dares,
And he that truly serves is then divine.

AMBITION

“ Long have I sued, and still have sued in vain;—
My one and only love, why dost thou wreak
Thy scorn upon me? Wilt thou never speak
The word to ease my heart’s compelling pain? ”
“ If thou’lt be brave,” said she, “ thy sorrow’s rain
Shall breed a harvest; look! seest thou yon peak
That lifts at dizzy height its snowy beak?
Bear me to that, and thou my heart mayst drain.”
Upon his back he took the tempting maid,
And upward went; up and still up he strode,
The distant, glittering peak his constant guide;
Still up, o’er Alp on Alp, he strained, nor stayed
Till to the pinnacle he bore his load—
Then like an idiot laughed . . . and gasping . . .
died.

MURMURINGS IN THE DARKNESS

(AFTER FERNAND GREGH)

This eve a wind divine is stirring in the trees;
Its long-drawn sighing fills the lonely, sombrous Park;
Nought but the wind one hears, nought but the gloom
one sees,
While shadow-murmurings seem at times to bid us hark.

'Tis like a rambling stream in eddy vaguely tossed
'Neath the wan sky where gleams a lone star's emerald
light;
It draws anear, then fades, till in the distance lost,
And at the window feigns to pass before our sight.

It bathes each thing like water fragrant, crisp and sweet.
Like airy, magic waves that lightly flow at will,
So that in all the world no leaf or moss could meet
Its tender touch and not voluptuously thrill.

'Tis languor's all and ardor's, all that joy can own,
With all that dreams, glides, faints, or noiseful passes by;
'Tis like the silk's delicious, softly-rustling tone,
Or like the nighttime's tremor dumb with ecstasy.

In truth, amid the dismal depths profound we mark
Its warm, mysterious wine elate the heart and brain,
Something of heaven itself, at times we dare to feign,
Something that's vast, august;— yet vain and ever vain.

It is as though a sigh of God filled all the dark.

THE MYSTIC

In symbolized beauty all appears
To him in nature as in art,
The while in ecstasy he hears
Bright angels singing in his heart
Oh, would we had some sight of his
To see life's glory as it is!

LOVE NOT DEAD

Thou fearest thou dost not love me as of yore;
That time has plundered all affection's store;
But should death take me from the sight of men,
Canst thou believe thou wouldest not miss me then?

OPTIMISM

The golden lances of the sun have slain
The cruel fog that veiled the river's breast,
And every crystal wave, now unoppressed,
Leaps in the light with re-exulting strain.

The birds, that long beyond their hour had lain
Hidden and still, troop forth with gladsome zest,
And in triumphant song their joy attest,
To see the conquering sun resume his reign.

Ye varied aspects of the woodland scene,
How ye enchant us; how bid us hold
True to the course throughout creation rolled:
No desert spreads its waste undowered of green,
While mid time's sombre, perdurable tombs
God's sifted, quenchless light forever looms.

IN ALL THE DAYS

The generations come and go
In immemorial, ghostly show;
They pass, and pass, and are no more
Than are the leaves of eldest yore
That wintry winds blew to and fro.

What toils and moils were theirs to know,
What withered blooms were theirs to grow,
What dust made up their treasured store
In all the days!

And yet the streams of life still flow,
No evil stalks but meets its foe,
The Muse still guards her golden lore,
While deathless Love still hovers o'er
The anguished bed of many a woe,
In all the days!

THE STRANGENESS OF IT

In tattered garb, unshaven and unshorn,
Aimless along the city's crowded street
He shuffles, knowing none that he may greet
Save some poor creature like himself forlorn.
Yet three-score years ago when he was born,
What peaceful raptures more than honey-sweet
In every heart-throb of his mother beat!
How proud his father on that hopeful morn!
And as he begs of me a paltry dime,
With tremulous voice and most appealing face,
To buy necessity for nightly rest,
'Tis strange to think there could have been a time,
When sheltered in a mother's fond embrace
He slept an infant on her heaving breast.

REMEMBRANCE

They tell me, gentle lady, thou art dead,
And that the sons thine eye saw nobly grow
Bewail and weep that they no more can know
The fruited feast thy spirit daily spread.

And while they mourn I see thy youthful head
With mine o'er Virgil's pages bended low,
To try to catch his strain's mellifluous flow,
As every moment all too swiftly sped.

O springtime days when Hope sat high in state,
Full oft death's dreadful wizardry compels
Your bitter sweetesses again to be.

That far, old time, how dear! How consecrate
The fairy stories which it fondly tells!
How filled to-night with fragrant thoughts of thee!

RESOLUTION

O heart, thou wilt not fail,
O heart, thou canst not fail:
Let every ruthless foe
Deliver blow on blow,
Let every venomed hate
Its keenest hunger sate,
Till all the ambient air
Seems breathing but despair,
Yet thou shalt march straight on,
Nor yield, nor bend, nor fawn,
Till Victory's Land of Light
Looms large before thy sight.

NOT ENVY

Base Envy's poison cannot foul my soul
When some strong spirit grasps his yearned-for goal;
But surges then anew the deep desire
To be inflamed with his celestial fire.

LIFE AND DEATH

An owl sat on a dead tree's limb,
Where, as the sunset showered on him
Its paling gold, we startled saw
A mangled mouse beneath his claw.

And then we fell to musing there,
Till sudden we became aware,
From Hesper looming into sight,
That Day was in the grasp of Night.

IMPRISONED

My prison house is loneliness,
Whose jailors are my fears;
My food is but mine own distress,
That's moistened with my tears,
She said, and in her clouded eyes
I read a tale of miseries.

THE TRUE COURSE

How gently run the luring days along
Upon the bosom of seductive ease,
My boon companions nobly-striving trees,
And stream soft-throated with unending song.
The storm-voiced ragings of the mart's great throng
Fall lightlier on my drowsèd sense than these
Plumed grasses' murmurs, nor does any breeze
Waft to my soul the terrors of a wrong
Up from this bed of sweet delights and be
Again afloat upon the human sea,
My brother's heart in beat against mine own;
Endeavor's rock-bestudded course for me,
Though driven, mid all the dangers ever known,
To shores where hopeless ruin reigns alone.

THE HAPPINESS OF THIS WORLD

(AFTER PLANTIN, SIXTEENTH CENTURY)

A spacious house to have, proportioned as is due,
A garden where the trellis breathes with fragrant vine,
Few servitors, few children, fruits and flavorous wine,
In quiet to possess a wife that loves but you;

All quarrels, debts, amours and lawsuits to eschew,
With kin to little share, for nothing more to pine,
The favors of the Great contented to resign,
Your every plan to form on model just and true;

Exempt from vain ambitions, unconstrained to live,
To worship's holy rites your deepest self to give,
The passions to subdue until obedient they;

To keep the judgment strong, the spirit calm and free,
In every stress of labor still your prayers to say,
This is with faith to wait serenely death's decree.

CHRISTMAS BELLS

Ring out, O heartsome Christmas Bells,
 Ring clear, and deep, and long,
Till every noblest feeling swells
 To crush the mean and wrong;
Till love, with her angelic train,
 Encamps within the soul,
And bids her most melodious strain
 Throughout its chambers roll;
 Till raging ires'
 Pernicious fires
In all the lands die down and cease,
While reigns supreme the King of Peace.
 Ring out, ye Christmas Bells!

Ring out, O sacred Christmas Bells,
 Ring far, and loud, and long,
Till once again within us swells
 That old, earth-given song,
First heard beneath the wondrous ray
 Which led the Magians where
An infant all divinely lay,
 And breathed immortal air;

Till we shall heed
His simple creed,
And learn, as on we stumbling go,
To love is better than to know.
Ring out, ye Christmas Bells!

Ring out, O memoried Christmas Bells,
Ring sweet, and low, and long,
Till every bosom gently swells
With thoughts, in grieving throng,
Of brightsome eyes that fondly shone
On ours this hallowed day,
Of lips that spake with tenderest tone,
Now passed from earth away;
But while we hear
The bells ring clear,
Those eyes again with fondness shine,
Those lips bespeak a joy divine.
Ring out, ye Christmas Bells!

UNDER THE BAY

ON LOOKING AT A PICTURE OF WORDSWORTH

Immortal Wordsworth, as thy pictured face,
With all its placid calm, its brow serene,
Its mild, benignant majesty of mien,
Moves me to-day as with unwonted grace.
I fain would yield, if only for a space,
My soul to thee completely, and so clean
My thoughts of all impurities terrene,
That they with thine might dare to interlace.
Thou deep-voiced singer of soul-quicken^g song;
Thou nature's child to being's very core;
Simple in all thy ways, yet bold and strong;
One that to loftiest mountain-top could soar
With unlaborious wing, yet skim along,
No less at ease, the valley's daisied floor.

TO TENNYSON

As comes to all, so thou didst pass away
To that unfathomable, dark beyond,
Before whose mysteries thine enchanting wand
Stirred soulful music to her deepest play;
And meet it was that when Death came, to lay
His finger on that brain of dream so fond,
Thy soul should yearn for Shakespeare's golden bond
To bind the moments of thy closing day.*
Thou deftest master of poetic art,
Whose verse is tinct with noble dignity,
And makes of England an immortal part!
Familiar things are glorified by thee,
While dullest blood leaps lightly through the heart
At thy far-sounding song of chivalry.

* "On the bed a figure of breathing marble, flooded and bathed in the light of the full moon streaming through the oriel window; his hand clasping the Shakespeare which he had asked for but recently, and which he had kept by him to the end."—*Extract from the Medical Bulletin of Dr. Dabbs—Tennyson's attending physician.*

SWINBURNE

What words are his of myriad, dazzling dyes,
That on the heart entrancing beauty throw;
What streams of melody he bids to flow,
As passion's ecstasy each humor tries;
But where the thought mid cloying sweetness lies,
Or oft is lost in waste of wordy show,
Or screams discordant at some hated foe,
Till Art lamenting pitifully sighs
And yet how great his Drama: Mary here
Immortal moves through maze of love and crime;
Here Knox forever shakes his priestly spear;
Here Bothwell schemes, the Satan of his time;
And here antiquity we newly con
In Atalanta's chase in Calydon.

TO WALTER SAVAGE LANDOR

Landor, thou art, in truth, the one unique;
A Briton, yet a Roman and a Greek,
And still no less Italian; in all time
Breathing ambrosial airs of every clime;
Who all the spoils of all the ages stored,
And drew such honey from thy heaping hoard,
That we who read thee pause and pause again
In wonder at the marvels of thy pen.

A lettered Titan, thou, so greatly great,
Thou sittest throned in high imperial state,
Like some immortal God that keeps his place
In lonely grandeur of unconquered space,
With none so venturesome as dare dispute
His rule as being less than absolute,
And who, impregnably contented, knows
That on the centuries he shall repose.

HEREDIA DEAD

OCTOBER 3, 1905

Vainly you'll call importunate and long
On him to add fresh jewels to his store,
For muse-beloved he dwells forevermore
With all the crowned ones of his deathless song.
And in the midst of that imperial throng,
Now newly splendored by his sonnet-lore,
Fame gently seats him and delights to score
Her beadroll with his name in letters strong;
For though he felt not passion's noblest ire
That bears the uttered thought on wings of fire,
Nor made his numbers all the vastness sweep,
Yet he was Art's, and drank of her desire,
Until Imagination, true and deep,
Burst into beauty on his flawless lyre.

TO JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL

AUGUST 12, 1891

Lowell, thou art not dead; thou canst not die
Till Letters' children all shall cease to be;
Till dawns the day (but who such day may see?)
When Art's innumerable crystal springs run dry;
When Fancy skims no more the meads that lie
In fadeless green, and, doomed by death's decree,
Imagination's mighty majesty
No longer ranges thought's besplendored sky.
Thou art the perfectest of all the flowers
That yet have blossomed on New England's soil —
Blending great character with stintless powers,
And making every literature thy spoil;
While all thy years thy jewel-crusted pen
Sent thrilling message to the hearts of men.

PROFESSOR JOSEPH LE CONTE AT
YOSEMITE, JULY 4-6, 1901

"If it were now to die,
'Twere now to be most happy."
Othello, Act II, Scene 1.

His hoary head, lustrous with all that's best
Of humankind, by fame immortal made,
In death's last agony he fitly laid
Upon Yosemite's titanic breast.

For years their mutual love had been confessed,
And when once more her glories he surveyed,
His raptured heart such ecstasy betrayed,
Fate dared not tempt him further to be blest.

Her beauteous leaves of cedar, oak and pine,
She lavish gave for garlands to entwine
His coffin fashioned from her teeming store;
And 'neath the reverent gaze of her great walls,
While throbbed in muffled tones her saddened falls,
His clay, star-lighted, left her evermore.

HENRY GEORGE

He, like some prophet in the days of old,
Took every fainting heart into his own,
And sought assuagement of the dreadful moan
Forever rising and by nought controlled.
Against the giant wrongs, whose coils enfold
The burden-wearied souls that hopeless groan,
His flaming message flew as if 'twere blown
By all the woes that earth has ever told.
His love was man's until his latest day,
When, battling 'gainst corruption's foul array,
He fell, to flood with glory all the scene.
Alas! Alas! the world has lost him now,
But men will look to it that on his brow
The laurel keeps imperishably green.

POPE

The choicest vintage of ambrosial wine
He knew not, nor the harmonies divine,
But who has matched, or who shall hope to match,
The wit and sparkle of his rapier line?

CHRISTOPHER SMART

Smart was the marvel of his sapless time:
To scribble reams of empty, futile rhyme,
Then in a phrensy of poetic art—
Crazed in his brain and saddened in his heart—
To pour his soul into one mighty song,
Where sparkling gems abounding so throng,
And blaze with such imaginative light,
That every year shall gladden in their sight—
A deathless song with nature's ruin bought;
No wonder his own century knew him not!

OSCAR WILDE

Say that his bosom nursed black pools of mire,
Where venomous snakes their lustful poison bred,
On which in bestial mood he weakly fed
Until Law smote him with relentless ire;
Yet in his soul still flamed celestial fire;
And Beauty's lovely legions wide outspread
Her conquering banner there, as raptured sped
The songs that shook his music-breathing lyre.
His dungeon's foulness leaves no speck or stain
Upon the white refulgence of his strain,
Nor bars its way along the loving years;
Nor takes the least from his all priceless gain,
That at the last he calmed his spirit's fears,
And died embathed in his repentant tears.

THE MUSIC OF WORDS

(TENNYSON said in one of his talks that "People do not understand the music of words.")

To give to Beauty her surpassing meed
As gemmed she lies immaculately fair;
To paint the hopes that end in fell despair,
While tones mellifluous every passion feed;
To follow Fancy's fairy kin that lead
Through vales of Dream embathed in drowseful air,
Or on Imagination's heights to dare,
What dulcet, rolling, golden words we need —
Such words as thine, thou mighty, crownèd one,
Who, like some inextinguishable sun,
Shall light the heavens of man forevermore;
Such words as Homer sent, long, long ago,
With music winged, through Greece's heart of woe,
Or such as Shakespeare made divinely soar.

UNDER THE CYPRESS

INVOCATION TO THE MUSE

Lend me the sounds from music's honeyed store
Of every soothing softness crystal clear,
To wing the words beyond all others dear
To Poesy's supernal, deathless lore;
Lend me the sounds of ocean's tempest roar
Presaging all that man can feel of fear,
To wing the words so awfully austere
That Hope herself to hear them would give o'er.
Then might I dare to sing her beauty's bloom,
And how within my heart's supreme desire
The chiefest thing of loveliness she lay;
And dare to sing that huge, appalling gloom
When death fell on her with immediate ire,
To bear her from my helpless arms away.

FROM JOY TO WOE

A music fell upon mine ear
As though from some celestial sphere,
Then sudden ceased, and discord's clang
Throughout my heart remorseless rang.

Alas, what awful woe
In human heart may grow!—
What dreadful thought to stab a man,
That Heaven from Hell is but a span!

THE KISS OF PEACE

An angel met me in the wood,
Where I unreconciled had fled
To scape the face of my dear dead.
She led me where her sister stood
With radiant face and lifted head;
Whereat they kissed me on the cheek,
But not a word did either speak.
They vanished, but I knew that they
Had brought me flower of peace that day.

DREAMS

I know not why so wearisome to me
My necessary tasks appear to-day,
Save that my brood of dreams is fain to play
Where all things beautiful are wont to be.
This very moment do I feel so free,
That nought can hold me under tasking sway,
As borne beyond the city's strenuous way
I float in soundless, deep serenity.
And now the mountains woo me ever on,
And many a lake lays bare its crystal breast,
While scene on scene its pillared beauty rears. . . .
O dreams that mock! for from me SHE has gone
Who shared these joys with me; and grief-oppressed
I sink to earth o'erweighted with my tears.

WITH SORROW

Sweet Sorrow, with thy hooded, tear-brimmed eyes,
Companion me this lonely, leaden day;
Lead me from clamors and delights away,
To silent list my heart's deep-muffled cries.

Though death made my dear one his precious prize
I've borne straight on, no duty to betray,
Nor dared one golden-hearted hour to slay
With fatal bane of solitary sighs.

But when at times her doom upon mine ear
Relentless beats, I faltering pause to hear,
And feel an agony no power can stay.

Some things of such eternal strength appear,
That past all thought or dream seems their decay. . . .
Sweet Sorrow, take me, I am thine to-day.

THE FOG ROLLS IN

The fog rolls in as it has rolled
For years that never can be told,
And all the sky of sombre-gray
Makes drearier still the dreary day;
 And hearts still ache
 Until they break,
As it has been with Death alway.

But though the fog be deeper rolled
The sun's above it as of old;
No sky can be so sombre-gray,
But that the blue will have its way;
 And hearts will wake
 For love's dear sake,
As it has been with Life alway.

MOURN NOT

Mourn not thy dead, although they may have shone
With fondest radiance on thy lessening years,
Nor sink appalled before the fatal shears
That bid thy treasured ones to leave thee lone.
Mourn not the seed thy hands have left unsown,
That might have joyed in golden-gloried ears;
Nor mourn thine evil hours, thy craven fears,
Nor fortune's favors which thou couldst not own.
All these are gone, nor canst thou call them back,
Though on their far-receding, darksome track
The voice of every grief were joined with thine.
Then seize, new-hearted, on the living Now,
And march straightforward, with unshaken vow,
Beneath's Hope's gladdening, promise-blazoned sign.

TO DEATH

Thou monster Death, that dost no mercy show
To least or greatest of the earthly train;
That hast made horrible thine endless reign
With tear-cemented monuments of woe;
Thou angel Death, that kindly dost bestow
Release from hopeless ill, from torturing pain,
From life's engulfing flood where fiercely strain
The desperate souls that faint and sink below;
Like Love thou art as old as oldest eld,
Yet ever new as is the wondrous child
This moment blossomed on its mother's breast;
And since the time that thou wast first beheld,
When Order's music rang through Chaos wild,
Life has by thee been nourished and caressed.

THE TOMB AND THE ROSE

(AFTER VICTOR HUGO)

The Tomb said to the Rose: "Love's own,
What mak'st thou of the tears bestrown
By lovely, dewy dawn o'er thee?"
The Rose said to the Tomb: "And pray,
What comes of that which feeds alway
Thy gulf that yawns eternally?"

Then said the Rose: "O sombre Tomb,
I make of them a rare perfume
Where honey with the amber lies."
Then said the Tomb: "O plaintive Flower,
Of every soul that feels my power
I make an angel of the skies!"

IN THE CEMETERY OF

(AFTER VICTOR HUGO)

The laughing living crowd by folly still is led,
At times where pleasure rules, at times where anguish
lies,
But here these all forgotten, silent, lonely dead
On me, a dreamer, fix their sad, regardful eyes.

They know me to be man of solitary mood,
A musing, strolling one that on the trees attends,
The soul that sadly learns, from sorrow's countless
brood,
In trouble all begins, in peace all trouble ends!

Ah, well they note the pensive, reverent mien of mine
Mid crosses, graves and boxwood, while they mutely list
To all the dying leaves that 'neath my foot repine;
And they have watched me dream in woods cool shades
have kissed.

O blatant living ones of strife and mad unrest,
My flowing voice falls better on these dead ones' ears!

My lyre's sweet hymns that lie deep hidden in my breast
That are but songs for you, for them are gushing tears.

Forgotten by the living, nature still is theirs:
In death's all silent garden, where we end our dreams,
In more celestial garb, and calmer, dawn appears,
The bird is lovelier still, the lily purer seems.

'Tis there I live!— there pluck the rose of pallid face,
Console with tombs that lie in desolation rent;
I pass, repass, the branches tenderly displace,
And stir the sighing grass;— the dead they are content.

'Tis there I dream; and roaming many a drowseful
space,
With thought-enwidened eyes I marvellously see
My very soul transformed as in some magic place,
That mystery-filled reflects the vast immensity.

'Tis revery's fond ideal fills my vision there,
Floating in shining veil between the earth and me;
And there my ingrate doubts are melted into prayer:
For standing I begin and end upon my knee.

The wandering beetles there I indolently watch,
The wavering branches, forms, and color-glinting gleams,
And on the fallen stones reposing love to catch
The dazzlings of the flowers and of the myriad beams.

As in the rock, whose hollow drips in sunless gloom,
For drop of water seeks the thirsty, humble dove,
So now my altered spirit seeks the shadeful tomb,
To drink, if but a sip, of faith, of hope and love.

RECONCILIATION

Thou heart-bereaved, complaining mite,
Why blink at God's eternal light,
Why make an individual night
 Of cowardly despair?
In the vast universe divine
Sink every grief and woe of thine,
And thou wilt nevermore repine,
 But sing in triumph there.

RAMBLINGS

BOAT SONG

Where the river murmurs music
To the purple-wreathèd hours,
While the leaning, lovely willow
On the wave its beauty showers;
Where the stately, towering redwoods
Mighty lords of nature seem,
Float we gently in the twilight,
Float we gently as in dream.

Though the saucy rocks would bar us,
Onward, onward still we glide,
Till the placid pools receive us,
Reaching far, and deep, and wide;
Resting then upon the bosom
Of the music-murmuring stream,
Float we gently in the twilight,
Float we gently as in dream.

MY SECRET

(AFTER FELIX ARVERS)

My soul its secret has, my life its mystery:
'Tis an eternal love an instant saw conceived.
My pain's beyond all hope, so silent I must be,
While she, the cause, knows not that I am sore bereaved.

Alas! I shall have passed anear her unperceived,
Still by her side and yet a lonely one to see,
And shall have served on earth to life's extreme degree,
Not daring aught to ask, and having nought received.

Though God has made her sweet and infinitely dear,
With heedless mind she'll go her way, and never hear
The whispering tones of love that all her steps attend.

Beneath the pious yoke of duty's rigid sway,
When she reads o'er this verse all full of her, she'll say,
"This woman, who is she?" and will not comprehend.

THE LADY'S ANSWER

(AFTER LOUIS AIGOIN)

My friend, wherefore aver, with so much mystery,
That the eternal love within your breast conceived
Is pain beyond all hope, a secret that must be;
And why suppose that she may know not you're
bereaved?

Ah no, you did not pass anear her unperceived,
Nor should you deem yourself a lonely one to see;
The best beloved may serve to life's extreme degree,
Not daring aught to ask, and having nought received.

The good God gives to us a knowing heart and dear,
And on our way we find that it is sweet to hear
The whispering tones of love that all our steps attend.

She who would meekly bow to duty's rigid sway,
Reading your verse of her, felt more than she can say:
For though she spake no word, . . . she well did
comprehend.

MY LADY SLEEPS

My lady sleeps, and sleeps in childlike peace;
No tear-drop stains her lovely, restful face,
While placid smiles do there each other chase,
To give assurance of her pain's release.
Her head low sinking in the pillow's crease
In deep repose I fain would now embrace,
Till in my heart, as in some holy place,
Joy swelled to thankfulness without surcease.
O Sleep, thou top of blessings! What to thee
Does grief-struck, ache-tormented man not owe,
Or how, without thee, from his miseries flee?
And now that thou my lady's couch dost know,
From torture's agony to set her free,
Thou beam'st upon me with divinest glow.

*

SONG

Dear love, around me fold thine arms,
And lay thy cheek against mine own,
Where nested safe from all alarms,
My heart shall be thy firm-set throne.

Reign there belovèd, reign alone,
With sceptre fashioned of thy charms,
Till winged by death we shall have flown
Beyond the reach of passion's harms.

THE ROSE

Thou lovely Rose, I cannot now but sigh,
To see thy petals thus dismembered lie
Lament not me: SHE wore me in her hair—
Ah, then I lived unnumbered hours there.

IN THE CONVENT GARDEN

(LAST SCENE OF CYRANO DE BERGERAC)

Steeped in autumnal dyes the mournful leaves
With sad insistence flutter to the ground,
And blend their voices with the vespers' sound,
To soothe the heart that still for Christian grieves.
Beneath the sighing trees her bosom heaves;
For memories throng, while he that in her bound
Brings worldly word comes not — he whom,
 thorn-crowned,
She still, as ever, blindly misconceives.
At last all worn he comes with feeble breath,
In whose sweet tenderness preluding death
Throbs strangely new a note from love's past years:
It tells that he, not Christian, won her kiss,
That his, not Christian's, pen had fed her bliss,
And that Remorse shall fill her cup with tears.

A WAIF

A lustrum and of years two score
Have passed since she the sheet ran o'er
Which, newly found, before me lies,
While I, with retrospective eyes,
Tear-dimmed, upon it muse and pore.

How strange that to my distant shore
So slight a waif from land of yore
Should float surcharged with heavy sighs
Of long-gone years.

Her cheeks that love's rich roses wore,
When she penned this, now bloom no more;
And yet, O Death, that scorned my cries,
I thank thee for this welcome prize
Safe housed with memory's myriad store
Of long-gone years.

AN OPERA CLOAK

Poor, cast-off opera cloak that shows
Your pride from hidden, long repose,
I smile to note the scornful eye
Wherewith my dear now puts you by,
Though richly wrought with broidered rose.

But ah, with what delight, who knows,
She donned you first to list to those
Rare strains that swelled in triumph high,
When Patti sang.

Mad fashion's blight upon you blows,
The diva's days now tuneless close,
Yet she that dooms your death and I
Have bred a love that dares not die,
Though we have borne heart-rending woes
Since Patti sang.

IN MEMORY

Full oft it was as balmy night
Wove many a web of dreamy light,
The moon so touched her budding charms,
I feared for my enfolding arms,
That held her close.

And so, on one forbidding night,
That knew no moon's caressing light,
All withered lay her blossomed charms
In envious death's relentless arms,
That held her close.

But oft again in memory's night
The moon refloods the scene with light,
And lovelier still, her wakened charms
Rejoice my fond, enfolding arms,
That hold her close.

COME NEAR ME WHEN I SLEEP

(AFTER VICTOR HUGO)

Oh, when I sleep, come closely to my couch
As did fair Laura to Petrarcha's side,
And as I feel thy breathing's balmy touch . . . —
 Sudden my lips
 Will part to thine.

When on my brow, where then perchance some dream
Of darkness settles which too long would bide,
Thy lovely eyes look down with starry beam . . . —
 Sudden my dream
 Will brightly shine.

Then if my lips, whose fluttering flame has learned
Love's lightning God himself has purified,
Are kissed by thee — to woman angel turned . . . —
 Sudden will wake
 This soul of mine.

CLEOPATRA

(AFTER ALBERT SAMAIN)

Leaned on the tower's battlements, all silent she,
The Queen, with radiant locks that fillets closely bind,
Allured by perfume's spells full troublous to the mind,
Feels mounting in her heart Love's vast, unresting sea.

Beneath her violet eyes, moveless, to dream resigned,
She sinks into her cushions' softly-sheltering nest,
While necklaces of gold deep heaving on her breast
Bespeak her languishment and fevers unconfined.

Upon the monuments' fronts day's last rose-tints are
spilled.

The eve, in velvety shade, is with enchantments filled;
While meantime as far distant cry the crocodiles,

The Queen, with fingers clinched, sobbing her heart
away,
Thrills to the bone to feel the artful, prurient wiles
Of hands that in the wind with all her tresses play.

THE CONDOR'S SLEEP

(AFTER LECONTE DE LISLE)

Beyond the Cordilleras' stairs that steeply wind,
Beyond the eagle's haunts in mist-enshrouded air,
And higher than the cratered, furrowed summits where
The boiling flood of lava rages unconfined,
His pendent pinions tinct with spots of crimson dye,
The great bird silent views, with indolent, dull stare,
America and space outreaching boundless there,
And that now sombre sun which dies in his cold eye.
Night rolls from out the East, where savage pampas lie
Beneath the tier on tier of peaks in endless line;
It Chili lulls, the shores, the cities' roar and cry,
The grand Pacific Sea, and horizon all divine;
The silent continent its close embraces hide:
On sands and hills, in gorges, on declivities,
And on the heights, now swell, in widening vortices,
The heavy flood and flow of its high-rolling tide.
Upon a lofty peak, alone, like spectre grim,
Bathed in a light that dies in crimson on the snow,
He waits this direful sea that threatens him as a foe:
It comes, it breaks in foam, then dashes over him.
As in the unsounded depths the Southern Cross now
 looms

Upon the sky's vast shore a pharos-glowing light,
His rattling throat speaks joy, he proudly shakes his
plumes,
His muscular, peeled neck he lifts and stretches tight;
To raise himself he gives the hard snow lashing stings;
Then with a raucous cry he mounts where no winds are.
And from the dark globe far, far from the living star,
In the icy air he sleeps on grand, outspreading wings.

MY SUMMER

Once more stern winter comes apace
With chilling wind and lowering sky,
But summer still makes glad thy face,
And in its warmth I restful lie.

THE EAGLE

On a lone crag, where Storm's wild children nest
Mid glacier's ice and vast, unmelting snows,
The lordly Eagle stands, while Morning throws
Her spears of golden light against his breast.
Deep stirs within him an unwonted zest,
And as the verdurous vale's serene repose
Alluring spreads, in scorn of waiting foes
He downward sweeps in majesty confessed.
But scarce his wings were folded from their flight,
When man's disloyal rifle smote the air,
And limp he fell in death's unending night;—
And when the hours had drearily dragged on,
His mate, in desolation's dumb despair,
Gazed at the vale reawakening to the dawn.

THE COCK

Adown his neck, upcurving high,
His plumes in golden radiance flowed,
With gleaming bronze his body glowed,
While all his tail of sable dye
Waved banner-like as proud he strode.

His comb in scarlet glory shone
Above an eye of stern delight,
And bits of rainbow tinted bright
His breast, as with resounding tone
His clarion shook the neighboring height.

For all the filth that reeked around
The purlieu's street he had no care;
He glorified its earth and air,
And with a flawless beauty crowned
Strode on in lonely splendor there.

THE ORCHARD

(AFTER EDMOND ROSTAND)

(The original of the following version was published in the November 28th, 1903, number of Harper's Weekly, with the following introduction: "The following verses were written by M. ROSTAND, the Academician and playwright, on the occasion of a performance given recently in Paris in aid of the Actors' Home. This home—the 'Maison des Comédiens'—is for actors who have grown old in their profession, and is situated at Couilly, near Paris. It will be opened during the coming year. The verses are dedicated to M. COQUELIN, who, as President of the French Society of Actors, was largely instrumental in making the Maison des Comédiens possible.")

What orchard's this wherein the Cid recites his strain
With tremulous voice beneath the sun's warm, genial
light?

Where not so eager now of folly to complain,
Since whitening fast he sees the locks of Célimène,
With leaves of living green Alceste his coat makes
bright?

What orchard's this wherein the Cid recites his strain?

Its distances in golden glory melt away;
Smooth-faced as some old Marquis, all the strollers
there.

What Park is this wherein thy soul of frolic play
— Thy great soul seeming but the trivial to essay! . . . —
Breathes deep the lovely landscape's fresh, delicious air . . .
Beneath a sky whose golden glory melts away?

Old dames who seem to owe to art their agèd air
Pluck blooms where insects flash their emerald-tinted
dyes.

No more the reeking den! No more gloom's dull despair!
And on all sides the Garden looking to the skies!
While underneath the boughs in pensive meekness fare
Old dames who seem to owe to art their agèd air.

A time-worn shawl is draped as with a princess' hand;
Hernani buttons on a box-coat out of date;
The names that light their past incessant they
command. . . .

A Frédéric one has heard, and one, Rachel the great!
And then the trees become an audience ranged in state,
Where time-worn shawl is draped as with a princess'
hand!

Here sadness flits away like curtain upward rolled.
Not in the least be lost the dreams that follow you,

You that to us bore cups of dream in days of old;
And, charmers of our evenings, now that yours are told,
Why should we not your footlights place beneath the
blue?

Here sadness flits away like curtain upward rolled.

What wide-spread orchard's this all filled with revery's
haze

And with comedians gay, like park by Watteau made?
Where wandering Mascarille, without his mask and
blade,

Dons now his theatre-cloak, as fancy's vision plays,
When soft the pine-trees fleck his mantle with their
shade? . . .

What beauteous orchard's this all filled with revery's
haze?

What beauteous orchard's this a Molière makes his own,
All pensive as he feels the soil's deep love control
The ivy's arms around his marble to be thrown,
And smiling as he sees Elmire and Dona Sol
Within the arbor chat in kind, familiar tone?
What beauteous orchard's this a Molière makes his own?

The moving vines festooned upon
The arbor have no fictive guise.
The pâté's not from pasteboard drawn
Which down the throat of Gringoire hies!
Misfortune's child no longer sighs;
Léander now is castellan;
Stirs Buridan while Scapin lies.
The orchard this of Coquelin.

The villain now on sheep would fawn;
The lover every calyx tries,
His piping voice forever gone. . . .
Yet on the side-scenes keeps his eyes!
In lakelet, which with mirror vies,
The Star delights to fondly scan
The twilight heaven's reflected dyes.
The orchard this of Coquelin.

Don César now has jacket on;
While Harpagon his vice defies,
And redemands his miroton; *
Sweet Agnes dreams, somewhat more wise;

* Miroton is a dish of minced beef and onions.

Of crawfish Perdican makes prize;
When tinkle, tinkle, rings Argan,
To do his will each swiftly flies. . . .
The orchard this of Coquelin.

ENVOY

Prince, princesses, we here devise
Some eves of golden-tissued plan,
And real the sun that walks our skies!
The orchard this of Coquelin.

LOVE

O Love, thou greatest solvent life can know!
In thy vast sea the bitterest pangs of woe,
The hardest flint of trial or of pain,
Dissolve and lose all mischief of their bane.

FROM A WINNOWER OF GRAIN TO THE WINDS

(AFTER JOACHIM DU BELLAY)

Nimble troop, to you
That on light pinion through
The world forever pass,
And with a murmuring sweet
Where shade and verdure meet
Toss gently leaf and grass,

I give these violets,
Lilies and flowerets,
And roses here that blow,
All these red-blushing roses
Whose freshness now uncloses,
And these rich pinks also.

With your soft breath now deign
To fan the spreading plain,
And fan, too, this retreat,
Whilst I with toil and strain
Winnow my golden grain
In the day's scorching heat.

THE HOMERIC COMBAT

(AFTER LECONTE DE LISLE)

The same as in the sun when swarms of monstrous flies

The hides of slaughtered bulls innumEROUS cover o'er,
Beyond their ships the men, with hair long-streaming,
pour

In whirlwind wrath and clamor raging to the skies.

All mix in tumult dire: mouths hoarse with desperate cries,

Loud din of blows, the live, and they that breathe no more,

Stallions uprearing wild, void chariots sprent with gore,
And levin-flashing shields in thunderous fall and rise.

With burning gaze, and head with writhing reptiles crowned,

The yelping Gorgon grinds her teeth as sweeps she round

The awful plain where blood exhales unceasing reek.

Zeus, furious, rises then upon his golden pave,
And all the mighty Gods, heroically brave,
Into the combat plunge from the cloud's topmost peak.

SUNBRIGHT HERCULES

(AFTER LECONTE DE LISLE)

O pang-born Tamer who as swaddled infant killed
The Night's fell Dragons! O thou Warrior, Lion-Heart,
Who pierced bane-breathing Hydra with thy burning dart
Where poisonous mist and mire their livid horrors
 spilled;
And who with flawless sight of old saw Centaurs start
At precipices' verge and wheel with rearing breast!
Of all the genial Gods, the eldest, fairest, best!
O purifier King, who through thy glorious days,
Made, as so many torches, from the East to West,
The sacrificial fire on every summit blaze!
Thy golden quiver's void, the Shade's at last thy goal.
Hail Glory of the Air! All vainly dost thou tear,
With thy convulsive hands where flames in rivers roll,
The bloody clouds which wreath thy pyre divine, and
 there
In purple whirlwind now thou yieldest up thy soul!

NATURE

(AFTER CHARLES BAUDELAIRE)

Nature a temple is, from whose live pillars rise
Voices that seem at times but from confusion drawn,
And where through maze of symbols man plods on
and on
Beneath familiar look of their close-watching eyes.

Like long-drawn echoing sounds in far-off distance
heard,
Immingling sombrous, deep, in oneness to unite,
Vast as the endless dark, vast as the endless light,
Sounds, hues and odors give each other answering word.

It breathes a perfume fresh as skin of little child,
'Tis sweet as hautboy's note, as green as prairie's breast,
— With complex, changing forms in triumph's richness
piled;

So infinite no bound its regions can invest;
Like amber, benzoin, musk, like every fragrant thing
That all the joys of sense and of the spirit sing.

THE AXE

(AFTER HENRI DE RÉGNIER)

Listen. Upon the stones the icy wind full drear
Makes slowly, surely sharp — workman no eye can see —
Its norther's bills and scythes as keen as steel can be.
Listen. 'Tis Time's dread step that on the road we
hear.

Listen. Afar e'en now the flowers are stripped and sere;
The neighboring mead's a-cold; and this majestic tree
At breath so murderous shakes and shudders fearsomely;
While trickles drop by drop its Dryad's life-blood dear.

The woodmen, binding bark and fagots, wend their way,
Alas! thy towering stature and thy strength to slay;
Thine own shade marks the hour for thee to be laid low;

But when some autumn eve is proud to see thee die
Amid thy golden limbs that all dismembered lie,
Then calmly, grandly fall beneath the axe's blow.

IN UNION SQUARE, SAN FRANCISCO

In joysome strength as by supreme decree,
In grace and beauty such as few can own,
Superbly poises on her columned stone
Our loved, renowned Lady of Victory.
One hand holds high the trident of the sea,
And one, the wreath for him by fame far blown,
While round her shaft wide spreads a verdurous zone
Where peace reclines in calm serenity.
Yet here misfortune's children in defeat
Despairing drone the jewelled hours away,
And hopeless mourn the unreturning years. . . .
How wretched those whose weary, trammelled feet
Can never reach achievement's crowning day
When every air throbs deep with victory's cheers!

IN SPRINGTIME

What azure fills the genial skies;
What fresh and balmy breezes rise
With rapture on their magic wings;
How teems the earth with fragrant things,
How sweet the songsters' mating cries!

'Tis now we look with gloating eyes,
And deem that every joy outvies
The joys of all the gladsome springs
Of other days.

Yet spring once wore still lovelier guise,
When she and I, in fondness wise,
Knew every bliss that April brings—
She, that dear one to whom death clings,
And hears unmoved the sobbing sighs
Of other days.

IN TIME OF NOVEMBER

The leaves are falling, falling,
By autumn's breath embrowned;
The restless winds are calling
With ever saddening sound;
And all the long-dead embers
Of all my past Novembers
Seem heaped in burial mound.

But Memory joys in bringing
Her loveliest blossoms there,
With birds whose heartsome singing
Dispels each dark despair;
And then those embers' fires
Reflame with June's desires,
Till Life grows newly fair.

AN ARIZONA CACTUS

The burning sun has scorched the rainless ground,
Where the volcano's progeny still lie;
And yet beneath an unrelenting sky
What creatures born to beauty may be found!
Just now we caught a bird's melodious sound
In unison blending with the pine's low sigh,
The while a daisy's all unenvious eye
Watched a near juniper with glory crowned.
But chief of all, behold yon crimson flame
The sun has kindled on the stone's gray breast
Within the Cactus's exulting heart
Beside thy light all others seem but tame;—
Thou desert-torch, thou beauty's topmost crest,
No voice could sing how wonderful thou art.

UNDER A PINE AT THE GRAND CANYON

Beneath a friendly, towering pine we lay,—
Its sun-smitten needles dancing in their bright,
Gem-glittering sheen,— and breathed the deep delight
That streamed ecstatic through the veins of day.

Below, the awesome canyon's vast array
Swam silent in its sea of azure light,
While far beyond, within our wondering sight,
The desert stretched illimitably gray.

Above us screamed a rapture-hearted jay;
And while the breeze swept music to our ears,
Whose murmurs deepened all the joys of rest,
Dream's noiseless pinions wafted us away,
Beyond the toils and tumults of the years,
To purple-glowing Islands of the Blest.

TO THE GRAND CANYON

Upon thy lofty rim we breathless stand,
As thy stupendous, myriad structures glow
With color's opulence, while far below
The raging river seems a slender band.
Thou feignest thou art eternal, yet thy grand,
Unrivalled palaces will surely go
In wreck adown the ages as they flow,
While other beauties will their place command.
Time is for man alone, and not for Him
Who bade the light forevermore to be,
And thee in all its amethyst to swim.
The Lord that fashioned us has fashioned thee,
And as we put our puny hands in thine,
We thrill to feel that we are both divine.

IN THE PETRIFIED FOREST, ARIZONA

All round us here, in myriad number strown,
The monstrous trunks, great chips and splinters lie,
Of great-armed trees that once besought the sky,
Changed to bright jewels of enduring stone.

What eons on slow-pacing wings have flown
Since first their verdure caught the sun's fond eye,
And since transfiguring nature bade them die,
To rise resplendent in this desert lone.

What glorious death was theirs, if death it be:—
To live in newer loveliness, and light
The solitude with love-enkindling ray;

The toad's and lizard's beauty they may see,
With many a bloom's, behold the eagle's flight,
And on all hearts the hand of wonder lay.

A LIZARD OF THE PETRIFIED FOREST

Upon an age-worn, upright stone
Of gems that once had been a part
Of some great tree's rejoicing heart
A Lizard, motionless and lone,
A glowing, living emerald shone
Of such encrusted, radiant sheen,
He reigned the monarch of the scene—
A creature nature's hand had done
When wrought the earth, and air, and sun,
In most harmonious unison.
He viewed us, as we passed him by,
With calm and yet with questioning eye,
But moveless still, as though the stone
Were portion of his being's own,
And voiceless as the forest is,
Whose jewelled ruins all are his.
The desert seemed to hold him there
As one of her supremest fair,
As one to whom our souls should owe
The best that beauty's love can know,
And with her prideful voice to say,
“See how I gem my breast of gray!”

THE SAWMILL

The demon Sawmill cried, I lack for food
Wherewith to cram this craving maw of mine,
That spite of nature and of law divine
Would gorge on all that's grandest in the wood.
Then they who madly serve the monster's good,
Mid jocund laughter, slew a towering pine,
As bright-eyed, cheery morn with flaming sign
Awoke to life the slumbering solitude.
For immemorial years this fallen one
Had been so loved by earth, and air, and sun,
He seemed with beauty for the ages clad;
And as his massive trunk and members lie
Dissevered and a wreck, we marvel why
The demon and its slaves can still be glad.

IN JEFFERSON SQUARE, SAN FRANCISCO

Beneath the maple's wide-spread canopy
In Spring's fresh garb miraculously dight,
I restful sit and muse as morning's light
Still newly trembles in the heart of me.
Adown the long, embowered arcades I see
The children schoolward wend, with hope all bright,
And many a wretch from life's despairing fight,
That here would soothe his aching misery.
The waves of traffic, rolling loud near by,
Cannot persuade me now so much as these
Intrepid sparrows that around me play;
And here with them, and with this radiant sky,
As balmy breezes stir the whispering trees,
I pause and dream all carking cares away.

MAN AND TREE

We found ourselves within a woodland maze,
Where royal redwoods once held splendidous reign;
But years agone their noblest had been slain,
Till devastation ruled the sighing days;
And there we fixed our sadly wandering gaze
On one huge trunk of beauty's grandest strain,
Whose wonder-breathing life, destroyed in vain,
Seemed mocking man and all his ruthless ways.
And over and around it twined at will,
As though the murdered dead again to kill,
Vines that dealt poison from each venomed pore.
Its human brother's fate is oft the same:
When some brave soul is struck, to rise no more,
What baneful tongues delight to stab his name.

TO THE GRAND CANYON OF THE COLORADO

We breathless view thee as a thing that's living,
Filled with thine own all silent-moving blood,
No less than are thy furred and feathered creatures,
Nor than thy roaring, wonder-working flood;—
And truth, when filled with light's empurpling wine,
Who then can doubt thy life to be divine?

Or when mysterious dawn creeps o'er the desert,
To fold thee in her wide-embracing arms,
And all thy palaces, and domes, and towers,
Tremble with seeming new-created charms,
While Navajo, by her in passing kissed,
Serenely glows a flawless amethyst.

WITH MEMORY

'Tis Memory steers me as my boat drifts by
The banks with blossoms prodigally gay,
While far and near with many a carolling lay
The mating songsters fill the earth and sky.
Here let me stop, and 'neath this elm-tree lie,
Where boyhood's moments passed like dreams away,
And once more watch the sun's expiring ray
Light the cows homeward from the pasture nigh.
Their tinkling bells die out along the lane;
The gloaming slowly deepens into night,
And mid the darkness Memory flits from me.
Would she had longer stayed; but her delight
Has sweetly soothed the Present's piercing pain,
And bade me hope for worthier days to be.

A REMEMBRANCE OF AUTUMN WOODS

I do remember in the long ago
How flamed the maple 'gainst the clouded sky,
While oak and hickory as with human sigh
Saw all the ground their dying leaves bestrow.
Ah, then the pulse of things beat sad and low,
And silently the shrivelled brook passed by
Where wakening Winter seemed so very nigh,
We faintly heard his boreal trumpet blow.
But then what joy rapaciously to loot
The pawpaw's and persimmon's luscious fruit,
That ripening frost had lovingly passed o'er,
As walnuts from their mother trees fell down,
On many an eve the jocund feast to crown,
With jennetings all mellow to the core.

MY BOHEMIA

A FANTASY

(AFTER ARTHUR RIMBAUD)

With fists in tattered pockets forth I strayed,—
My great-coat, too, not far from raggery,—
Beneath the skies, O Muse, all true to thee;
And there what radiant love-dreams round me played!
My only breeches gaped with holes as I,
Poor, little dreamer, many a rhyme dropped where
My footsteps fared; mine inn the heaven's Great Bear,
'Neath stars whose soft, sweet rustlings filled the sky.

I heard them as I sat by roadsides when
September's eves were steeped in balm; and then,
As with strong wine, my face was wet with dew;
And rhyming mid strange glooms a lyre I made
Of my torn shoes' elastics, worn and frayed,
As near my heart my wearied foot I drew.

GEORGE MOORE, in his "Impressions and Opinions," states that RIMBAUD wrote the sonnet the version of which from the French is here given, when he was fifteen years of age, and that its first publication was in the book with title as above.

TO BEAUTY

What joy to watch thee as thy wings with zest
Bear tremulous Dawn along the gladsome height,
Or when with languid beat they shed their light
Of paling crimson on the saddened West;
To see thee flitting, as a seraph blest,
Through dale and wood the meanest to bedight,
O'er pools deep-bosomed brooding, and with Night
Lying mid splendors of her vasty breast!
The canvas throbs beneath thy deathless art,
While at thy word the Sculptor newly wakes
To sudden life the eon-slumbering stone;
And when thou leadest to the Poet's heart
Thy flock of airy dreams, he raptured makes
The song all ages cherish as their own.

TO THE OWL THAT ALIGHTED ABOVE THE
PICTURE OF ATHENS HUNG IN ONE
OF THE LECTURE HALLS OF
RUTGERS COLLEGE

IN MEMORY OF THE LATE PROFESSOR JACOB COOPER OF RUTGERS COLLEGE

O thou, wise bird Athene made her own,
Did instinct's pulses beat within thy breast
When in this college hall thy wings found rest
Above the picture of her matchless throne?
Or wast thou here at friendly moment blown
By breeze favonian, to remind us lest
Our faith in old ideals, so long professed,
Be like the Parthenon's columns — overthrown?
It matters not; we take thee as thou art,
And house thee safe and warm in every heart,
For ne'er before was spectacle like this;
And now we feel the centuries backward rolled,
While in supernal splendor as of old
Upsoars the temple-crowned Acropolis.

ULYSSES AND CIRCE

In sunless vale the Circean palace stood
A marble wonder, where, mid luring song
And drowseful, fragrant sweets men lingered long,
To drain their hearts and souls of every good.
As wrought she at her web in singing mood,
All unsuspecting came Ulysses' throng,
Whom, like the rest, though bearded men and strong,
She changed to beasts with bestial form endued.
Then rose Troy's hero in tremendous ire,
And scourged foul Circe with such whips of fire,
She helpless crouched within her poisonous den;
And forth from out the wallow of their sty
His rescued fellows sprang with sparkling eye,
Once more bold-hearted, undespairing men.

At last the waxen wings were all complete.
Then spake wise Dædalus unto his son,
Who, hot with pride that now escape seemed won,
Longed for his pinions to supremely beat
In loftiest waves of air: "My boy, most sweet
Of everything the Gods for me have done,
Bridle thy mad desires, lest they outrun
Discretion's course and dash thee to defeat"
On them King Minos gazed with wondering eye
As swift they sailed through morn's auroral sky
From him and Crete; then smote his breast with glee,
As upward soared vain Icarus to the sun,
To downward, headlong plunge, a wingless one,
Into the jaws of the devouring sea.

THE DEEPEST POEM

The deepest poem is the one we feel,
And not the one that language can reveal;
Oh, times there are when music stirs the soul
Beyond mere words to measure or control,
And myriad thoughts flit ghostlike through the brain
That all the tongues of earth could never chain.
Let artist paint with ne'er so deep a speech,
Let poet sing with all that can beseech,
Great worlds there are they cannot hope to reach;—
But souls like theirs are born to greatly live,
And who may know what life on life may give?

THE BROOK

(AFTER THÉOPHILE GAUTIER)

Between two stones, in shady nook,
From spring that oozes near a lake,
In merriest humor runs a brook
As though some far-off goal to make.

It murmurs: Oh, what joy is mine!
Below the ground what night to see,
And now my banks with verdure shine,
While skies admire themselves in me.

The azure myosotis cries
To me, Forget me not, I pray!
I feel the tails of dragon-flies
My bosom scratch in sportive play.

From out my cup the bird drinks free;
And after winding far, who knows
But that the vales, rocks, towers will be
Bathed by my wave that grandly flows?

I shall embroider with my spume
The bridge and quay's granitic wall,
And bear great steamers as they fume
Toward ocean vast, the end of all.

Thus talks the brook in chattering craze;
In it a hundred projects grow;
Like water boiling in a vase
No self-restraint its soul can know.

But tomb and cradle stand anear;
The giant dies a pygmy small:
To trouble born, the brook falls sheer
Into the lake that drinks it all.

ROME

A strange-eyed Eagle fiercely tore its way
From out the breast of Latium, and began
At once to feed upon the blood of man,
And grow enormously from day to day.
Its maddened craving nought had power to stay,
Though down its throat the gore in rivers ran,
And though so hugely grown its wings did span
The world itself that trembled 'neath their sway.
At last made weak from surfeiting on woes,
And urged no more by War's infuriate cry,
The monstrous thing was rended by its foes;
And yet it died not, nor can ever die,
For they that felt the mangling of its claw
Still conquered lie beneath its deathless Law.

THE RUSSIAN BEAR

(1905)

How sinks his heart within his trembling frame,—
This evil-breeding, monstrous Russian Bear,—
As now he sees his plundered minions dare
All deaths and agonies in Freedom's name;
As now he counts the crimsoned years of shame,
That his engorging vultures of despair
Have feasted on the children of his care,
To blaze his deeds with infamy of fame.
About him rage unconquerable fires,
Blown by the breath of chainless, vast desires,
While blood rolls round him in a mighty sea;
From out whose seething foam God grant may rise,
In newer strength, before his wondering eyes,
The dazzling Goddess, hope-crowned Liberty.

4

IN A STUDIO

SONNETS SUGGESTED BY PICTURES PAINTED BY

WILLIAM KEITH

This is his studio; here with brush and brain
He fills the hours; and here unnumbered things
Of beauty rise on Art's unwearied wings,
To settle in the heart and there remain.

Here Color leads her myriad-tinted train
Through fadeless fields; in turn each season brings
Its harvest; while Imagination flings
Her gems amid the forest's mighty fane.

O wondrous garden, where such wonders grow,
Thou art, indeed, a place of bloom where dream,
Upon ambrosia feeding, smiles at death;
And where ensconced from life's tumultuous show,
The soul, in joysome liberty supreme,
Draws restful, uncontaminated breath.

SOUND AND COLOR

(THE PAINTER SPEAKS)

Not only sound, but color, deeply lies
Within this gong a Daimio made his own
When glory claimed him in the years long-flown—
Ay, all the hues of seas, and lands, and skies;
And now I thrill beneath its every tone,
From war's horrific din to love's low sighs,
Until my canvas in melodious guise
A jewel seems on Music's throbbing zone.
Ah, yesterday it struck a note so sweet,
So suave and soft, I felt as ne'er before
The gracious moonlight blessing all the earth;
And now behold it in my picture beat!
Canst thou not feel it strangely stealing o'er
Thy soul with something of a newer birth?

THE SHEPHERDESS

How lightly fall the footsteps of the Day
In nearing now the chambers of the west,
As loth the woodland spirit to molest,
That broods in quietude the hours away.

And what of her on whom the shadows play?
Is hopeless love her bosom's fearsome guest,
Or tends she here the sheep, all unoppressed
By weight of thought, and free of care as they?

It matters not: she takes her radiant part
With sky, and tree, and pool, in this fair scene
Where Beauty gives her brood still newer sheen —
Beauty, the sovran sorceress of the heart,
That garbs no less the tiniest blade of green
Than grandest structure of the poet's art.

DAWN

Alluring Night soft folds her starry wing,
For now the sun beats down her vast array,
As all along his unresisted way
His dazzling brilliances their glory fling.

These pulsing clouds announce the conqueror King;
Yet not with banner blazed with ruby ray,
But one whose opal light of lustrous gray
Gives strange, fresh beauty to each dawn-kissed thing.

The birds have scarce aroused, yet man is here,
To lay the dewy grass beneath his knife,
And bear it off upon the near-by wain.

Thou wondrous New-born Day; what hope, what fear,
Lie coiled within thy breast; what peace, what strife,
And what ambitions that are worse than vain!

EVENSONG

Day's glare and noise are done for you and me;
Its dying glories tremble in the west;
The stars are near; and Evening's tranquil rest
With balmful softness fills the wood and lea.
All shadeful lies the pool's untroubled breast
Near where the shepherdess, full fair to see,
Walks with her sheep as gently sighing she
Builds fairy dreams of him beloved the best.
And as the twilight slowly draws anear,
What all-pervading tones we seem to hear
As deep-voiced requiem to the parting day;
For Nature's harmonies are soaring high
In vesper hymn against the very sky,
With dream and ecstasy to lead the way.

ON WATCHING THE ARTIST PAINT A
PICTURE OF MOUNT SHASTA

With what sure deftness do I see you rear
This mass of Shasta in the azure air,
Enrobing him with snow so purely fair,
Unmelted it shall lie for many a year.

And what huge boulders, glacier-carved, sprawl here,
Impressed with sudden strength; while as we stare,
Breathless and rapt, far pines uptowering dare
The winding canyon's precipices sheer.

Ah, mid this magic comes again the time
When Shasta loomed before me day by day,
And alway with a seeming new surprise;
But where is she who in her beauty's prime
Beheld with me his glory? — passed away
Far from all reach of earthly ears and eyes.

A VISION

Sweet Morn trips lightsomely along the sky,
Awakening earth and all the things of air,
Whose trees, joy-hearted, murmurous greetings bear
To the far lake and bloom-gemmed grasses nigh.
Some pigeons, snowy-white, encircling fly
Above two maidens, — loveliest creatures there, —
Who send their dreams on voyage calm and fair
To Love's own harbors that resplendent lie.
O blessed Morn! — Thy wealth no garish day
In heartless mock can ever take away,
Nor these fond doves to ravening ravens turn.
O fortunate maidens! — Alien to all tears,
Your beauty shall not fade, but brighter burn,
To consecrate your Vision to the years.

THE RETURN FROM THE RAID

With rapine glutted he returns once more,
Trailed by his vulturine, marauding crew;
But not the roisterous wassail to renew,
Nor on some foe to lock the dungeon door;
For lo, there loom, his blasted sight before,
Consuming flames that all the sky imbue,
To light his castle's ruins as they strew
The scene that devastation revels o'er.

When this bold knight rode forth to rob and slay,
He sweetly sang a merry roundelay,
Nor thought of her his baseness had betrayed;
And now we fancy seated on a stone,
Downfallen from its prideful tower, the lone,
Distracted figure of a hapless maid.

THE MOUNTAIN

What wrecks of Time and Storm are crumbling here!
The rocks that seemed eternal shattered lie,
And pines that sang their glorias to the sky
In mute dismemberment stretch prone and drear.
Beneath this gloomful shade, wide spreading near,
What hidden things in loneliness may sigh,
What spirits of the past may wander by,
Their cheeks bedewed with unavailing tear!
But look beyond: the towering summits glow
With grand magnificence of dazzling light,
That tints with rainbow hues their bosoming snow;
And as we gaze, a more than mortal might
Lifts the rapt soul from all the glooms below
To faiths that blaze immaculately bright.

PRAYER

All things here seem subdued to silent prayer;
The clouds hang moveless in the sombre sky,
The brook scarce whispers as it ripples by,
And stilled the restless pulses of the air.

The stately trees a fading splendor wear,
As now the westering sun's last gleamings die
Around a man, who views with saintly eye
The vast distresses that his fellows bear.

What centuried problems on this prophet weigh,
As mid the myriad mysteries of it all
Within this temple he is fain to pray!

Here babbling laughter flees beyond recall,
While grief, sore struck with pangs of countless years,
Seems bending low above a bowl of tears.

PROMISE

The shower has ceased, yet big with coming rain
The light-fringed clouds loom o'er the gladsome hills,
While all the sunbeam-glinted valley thrills
With expectation of its harvest grain.

This fresh, sweet soil but just upturned is fain
Its seed to press; the orchard blossom spills
Its fragrance round; and rising incense fills
The air to gratitude's symphonic strain.

O Earth, dear, bounteous mother of us all,
From thee we come, and at the last we fall
Into thy softly folding arms to rest;
And as the Master spreads thy beauties here,
We seem to lie serenely on thy breast,
With Promise gently soothing every fear.

THE UNFINISHED PORTRAIT

I cannot strike the color for this eye,
Nor bend the arch above it;— ah, to-day
My brush's cunning, do the best I may,
In heartless mockery seems to pass me by.
Thus spake the Master as he stood anigh
His easel, where a young man's portrait lay
So near to perfectness it seemed to say,
Give me not up ere once again you try.
Then with a fury such as genius knows,
He spread his pigments all that portrait o'er
Until a landscape shone divinely there;
And in the glories of its great repose
Imagination feels, as ne'er before,
Some hidden spirit breathe through all its air.

WILLIAM KEITH

All bottomless his well of Beauty seems:
For years his golden buckets have been drawn
From out its depths, yet on, and yet still on,
They rise full-brimmed with jewels of his dreams—
Jewels whose infinitely-colored beams
Reveal each way that Nature's feet have gone
In blossoming joy from dawn to dewy dawn,
Through skies and mountains, meadows, woods and
streams.

Ah, could the creatures he has painted stir
With languaged voice, what pæans would they raise
To their deep-loving, great interpreter.
How feeble then would seem man's loudest praise
For him who keeps bright youth within his heart,
To newly lustre his unaging art.

ENVOY

THE POET TO HIS PEGASUS

Dear Pegasus, attempt no more to rise;
'Tis all in vain;—these uneffectual wings,
That once we deemed were storm-defying things,
Fold now forever, if you dare be wise. . . .

But what great dream was ours!—ranging the skies,
Attent to every melody that sings,
Then drinking deep of Heliconian springs
To build impassioned verse that never dies. . . .

And now the Sonnet, that you fain would bear
As best of all the muse-devoted fair,
Despised and mocked, awaits her funeral pyre;
Where you may see, as with despairing heart
You haul, hard straining, some brick-laden cart,
Her lovely body crumbling in the fire.

SONG ITS OWN REWARD

(TO JOHN MUIR)

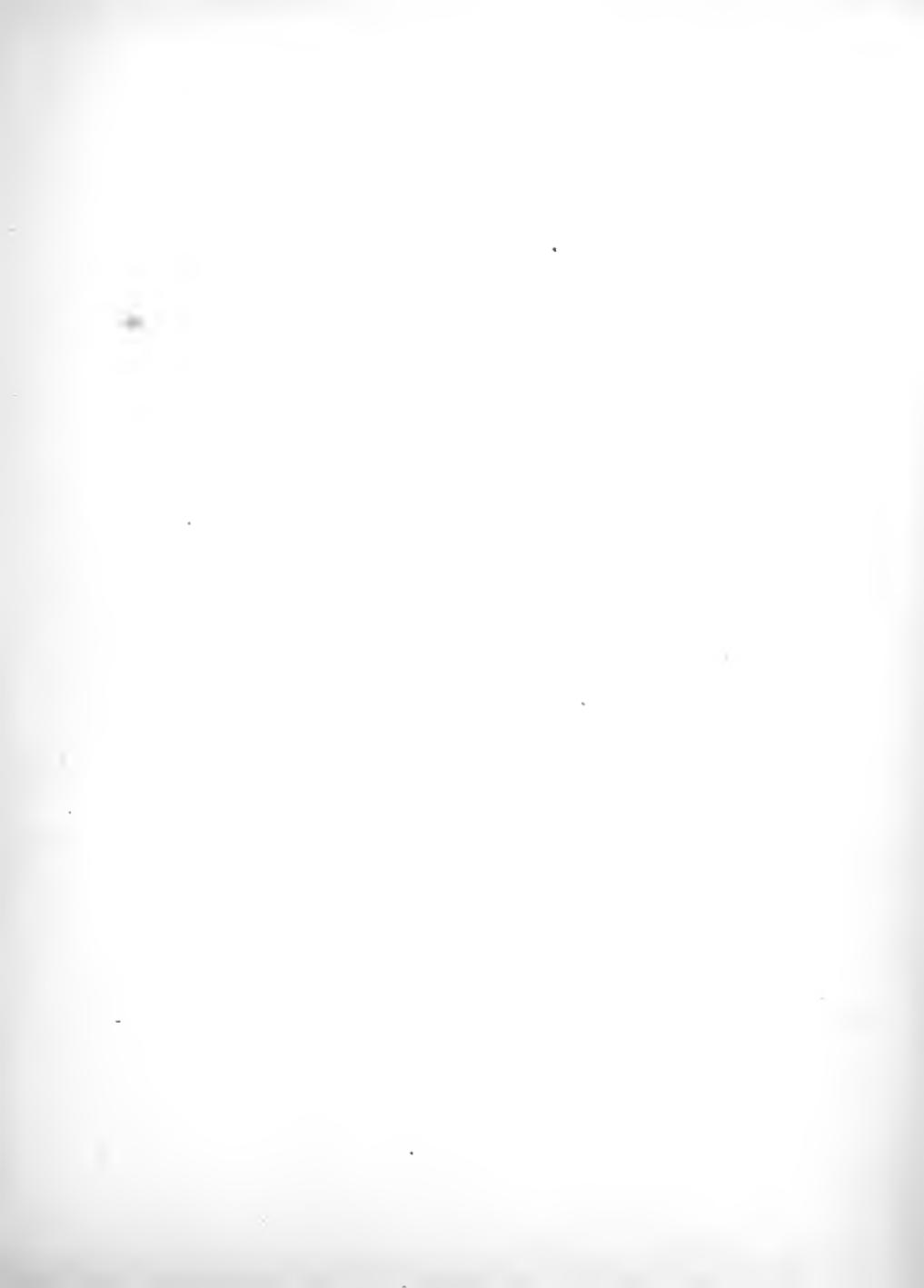
Song is its own reward, so said to me
My clear-eyed friend whose muse-inspired prose
With joy of being sings as on it flows,
Bearing the thoughts that teach us to be free;
Thou shouldst not hush one note of Poesy
That from Parnassian heights rejoicing blows,
Though none of all the world its music knows,
Or knowing cares for, saving only thee.
O friend, thou nursling of the mountain's breast,
True brother of the glacier and the pine,
'Tis meet thy voice this lesson has impressed;
For do not all these noble kin of thine
Ring out forevermore their strains divine
Though not one soul may hearken to be blest!

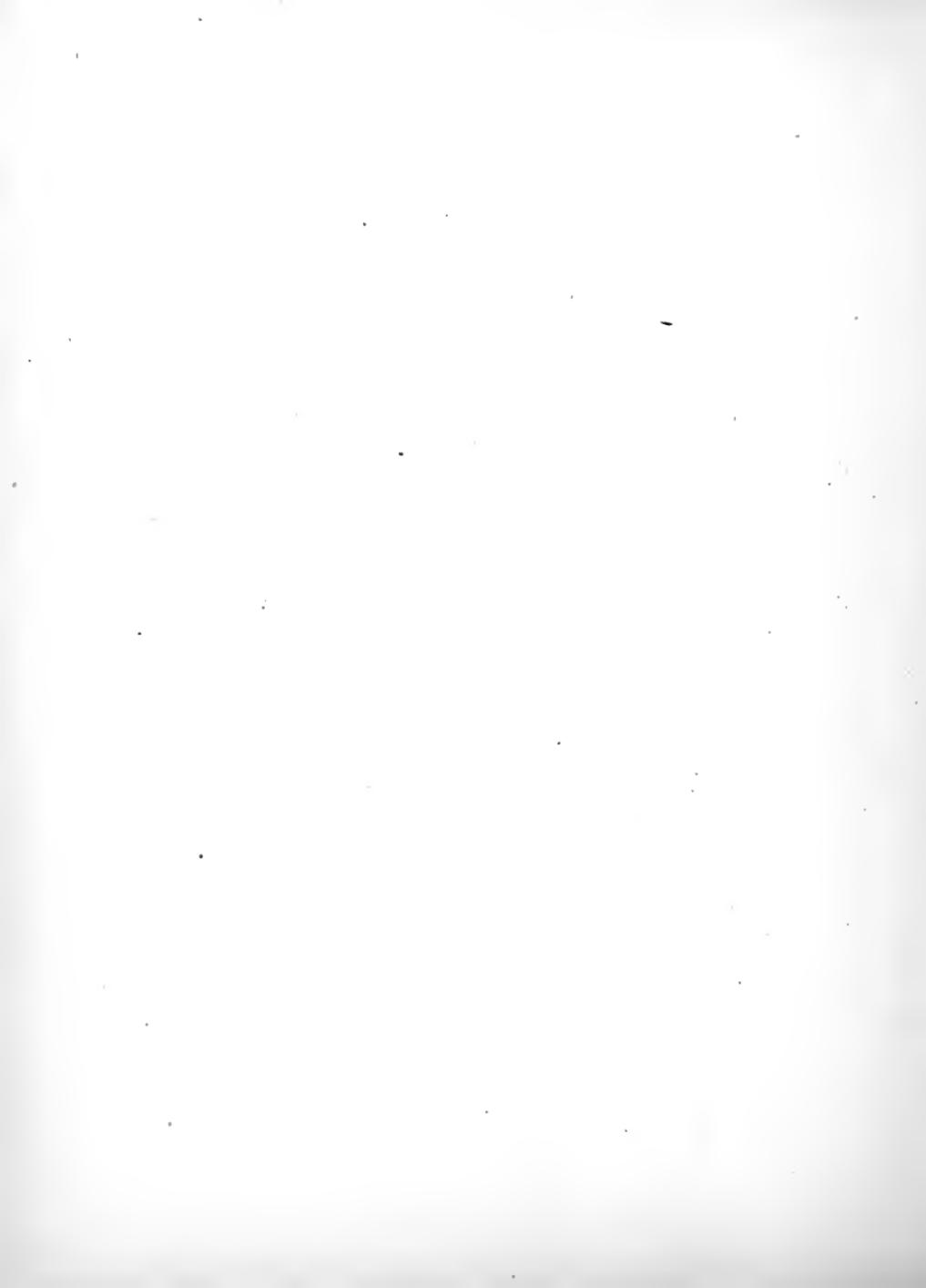
THE PASSION FOR PERFECTION

What deep desires are ours, what searching pains,
To find the word we so supremely need;
To frame a diction worthy Art's great meed,
That winged with music bears immortal strains!
Our thought when bound in rhythm oft contains
Such teasing imperfections, that we feed
The hours in their cure, then inly bleed,
For fear some vexing blemish yet remains. . . .
Dear nymph, Perfection, how thou dost elude
Thy fond pursuer! — seeming near, then far,
Enticing ever with allurement sweet;
Till after trial many a time renewed,
He sees thee blaze a solitary star
In some high, inaccessible retreat.

PINE NOT, NOR FRET

Pine not, nor fret:
The rains will fall,
The sun will shine,
The flowers still bloom,
And grains and fruits
Their riches yield;
The wheels will turn,
And ever turn,
And ships still sail,
And ever sail.
But do thy part,
With faith and love,
As best thou canst,
And nought on earth
Can work thee ill,
Or make thee feel
One pang of fear.











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